

*R. H. BLYTH*

ZEN  
AND  
ZEN CLASSICS

Volume Four

MUMONKAN

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DEDICATED  
TO  
SUZUKI DAISETZ  
THE GREATEST JAPANESE  
OF THIS CENTURY



## PREFACE

The aim of Zen is to open the eye of the "supreme reason" (*āryajñāna*), that is, to awaken the inmost sense which has remained altogether dormant since the beginning of the human consciousness. When this is accomplished one sees directly into the truth of Reality and confronts a world which is new and yet not at all new. This "new world," however, has been the subject of gross misunderstanding and fantastic interpretation by those who have never actually had the Zen experience. Among such interpreters we may count the modern addicts to uses of the so-called psychedelic drugs (LSD, mescaline, psilocybin, etc.). These drugs conjure up "mystic" visions, as did the ancient ones, and some advocates of these drugs imagine that there is in them something associated with Zen. That the visions have really nothing to do with Zen, psychologically or spiritually, is ascertainable when one carefully studies, for instance, Case XIX of this book. Zen is concerned not with these visions, as the drug takers are, but with the "person" who is the subject of the visions. The idea is more clearly indicated in Case XLVII where Mumon in his verse refers to the identity of "thought" and "thinker." As long as these psychologists are charmed with the phenomenology of consciousness, they can never get into the identity experience itself. They are forever on the surface of reality and never look into the secrets of the "Here-Now," which transcends the relative world of knowing and not-knowing, of seeing and not-seeing. The "supreme reason" does not lie in the domain of mystical visions of any kind.

Hindu philosophers call this eye of the supreme reason "Mahendra's third eye." It is said to open vertically between our two horizontal ones. When this third eye expresses itself, the expressions are paradoxical or contradictory. To it a mountain is a mountain and, at the same time, a mountain is not a mountain. To state this in "logical" terms, A is A and not-A, zero equals infinity, one is all and all is one. The readers of this book, *Mumonkan*, will discover phrases of this nature liberally scattered throughout it. And those who are yet unfamiliar with Zen works may be bewildered by these extraordinary expressions and not know what to make of them.

In truth, to understand Zen, we must plunge sooner or later into a world of non-duality where we are to deal with things not expressible in terms of relativity. As long as we linger in the realm of this or that, questions such as "What is life?" "What is the limit of birth-and-death (*samsāra*)?" "Whither are we destined?" "Whence is this existence?" will never be completely solved.

Questions of such ultimate nature for human beings are compared by Mumon to "barriers" and are called "the barriers of the patriarchs" whereby the masters test the sincerity and genuineness of the traveller-students who are wishing to go beyond the realm of relativities. Though the barrier-questions may often be set up in terms of ordinary language such as "Where do you come from?" or "What is your name?" or "Did you have your breakfast?," they gain a deeper meaning when handled by the masters, and the questioners are put in a <sup>quandary</sup> quandary. They have to confront the barrier which defies all possible device born of relativity, intellection, and mere verbalism. And so long as the questions are not completely solved, they will recur and torment us in one form or another, and no skill in mental therapeutics, no amount of LSD will effect the cure. Mumon graphically describes in Case I

the spiritual experience one must go through before "the door is opened unto thee."

Kōan, so to speak, is a more technical name for "barrier." The kōan age started early in the Sung dynasty, while in the T'ang there were no kōan because each student brought his own questions, philosophical or spiritual, to the master. The master then dealt with the troubled student in the way he thought best. Zen was, in those days, full of vigor and creativity. But with the decline and fall of the T'ang dynasty, Zen lost its original vitality, and the age of creativity gave way to an age of recollection, interpretation and "sporting" (拈弄 *nenrō*). Zen masters of the Sung then started the kōan system of study whereby the students were trained to apply themselves to the solution of the "cases" (話頭 *watō*) left by the old masters. Zen, as we see in *Mumonkan*, is now more or less a systematized teaching. Thus, generally, the first of the "barrier-gates" to be broken through is Jōshū's *Mu* after which the students proceed with more kōan as presented in this book.

What follows is a brief list of books that deal essentially with the study (工夫 *kufū*) of kōan. They contain examples left by the ancient masters, and instructions for beginners on how to apply themselves to the kōan so as not to be at a loss at the first encounter with the apparently nonsensical and logically unapproachable statements or utterances. Unfortunately, these works in Chinese are as yet inaccessible to the English readers. I will just give the titles and authors of the books hoping that some day before long competent translators may appear.

1. *Dai-e Sho* (大惠書). This is a collection of letters by Dai-e (1088-1163), one of the great masters of the Sung, written in response to the inquiries of his lay-disciples on how to approach the kōan and about the meaning of the experience of satori-awakening.

2. The *Zen-kan Saku-shin* (禪關策進) by Shukō of Unsei (雲棲株宏). The book was written in 1600 and the title reads "On whipping beginners to break through the Zen barrier." Its first volume consists chiefly of quotations from the various masters from Ōbaku of the T'ang down to the Ming masters in which they state their progressive experience in the mastering of Zen. The second volume quotes from the various sutras and patriarchal writing relating to Zen.

3. The *Zen-ke Ki-kan* (禪家龜鑑) by Seiko Kyūjō (清虛休靜 1520-1602), a great Korean master. The book was published in 1579 by his disciples. This learned author consulted some fifty books of Zen and compiled a standard text for beginners to use as a mirror by means of which they could examine themselves and discover the way to proceed in the study of Zen. For example, he advises them, at the outset, to set up before themselves a "great doubt" (大疑 *dai-gi*) or question which they should strive to solve with all the spiritual energy at their command. However, he warns them to do this by appealing not to their ratiocinative resources but by waking to a hidden power (that is, "the supreme reason"), as has been referred to above. This is a significant piece of advice which ought to be urged strongly upon the beginners of Zen study.

4. The *Hakusan Zen Keigo* (博山禪警語). This book contains Hakusan's most instructive advices to the students of the *kōan*. The author, whose official title is Mu-i Gen-rai (無畏元來 1573-1630), lived toward the end of the Ming dynasty when Zen was experiencing a steady and general decline. He also emphasizes the importance of having a "question" or a "doubting mind" (疑情 *gi-jō*) at the beginning—"Whence is life?" "Whither is it bound?" So long as this "doubt" in regard to birth-and-death (*samsāra*) is not dissolved, one cannot have peace of mind in any way and will



be tormented with all kinds of fear, anxiety, and frustration. It is worthy of note that Hakusan was greatly concerned with the problems both of mental torpidity and of minds susceptible to illusion, hallucination, or hypnotism.

My heart is heavy with grief as I conclude this preface by stating that Dr. Blyth is no more with us and that I have lost in him a fine friend with whom I could talk about all these things. He could have been induced to translate the above-mentioned books, to the great benefit of Western students of Zen.

Daisetz T. Suzuki

Kamakura  
October, 1965





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## INTRODUCTION

There is about a hundred years between the *Hekiganroku* and the *Mumonkan*. The seventy three years of the lifetime of Secchō extended from the end of the Tang through the Five Kingdoms to the Sung Dynasty. The *Mumonkan* appeared when the *Hekiganroku* was being forgotten (the second edition of the *Hekiganroku* came seventy years after the *Mumonkan*). At the beginning of the Sung, *Kanna Zen*, 看話禪, became especially popular in Zen temples, the "looking at the words," that is the *kōan*, of the older masters, by which emotional and intellectual religion were rejected and the existence-value of things, of all things, was to be grasped. Engo supported this, and Daie continued the tendency, calling *Mokushō Zen*, 默照禪, heretical or false Zen. *Moku* means silent (sitting); *shō* means spiritual light, and this became the Zen of the Sōtō School, with the Rinzai School practising the *Kanna Zen*. At this time, Confucianism was influencing Zen, and Zen Confucianism. What this means can be seen in the 19th century *Zenkai Ichiran*, 禪海一瀾. This implies, as far as Zen is concerned, that Zen was becoming more prosaic, and it is quite clear that the *Mumonkan* is far less literary than the *Hekiganroku*.

Five years before the publication of the *Mumonkan* appeared the *Shōyōroku* by Wanshi, which has, like the *Hekiganroku*, a hundred Cases.

Mumon was born in 1183, towards the end of the Sung Dynasty, 960-1279. He went to see Getsurin, the seventh successor of Yōgi, at Manjuji Temple. Getsurin, who was famous for his severity, gave him the *kōan* of Mu to study. After six years, Mumon had still not solved his problem. He swore he would not sleep until he understood Mu, and when he felt sleepy

he would go out into the corridor and bash his head against a post. One day, when the noon drum was struck, he suddenly came to a realization, and composed the following verse:

Out of a blue sky, the sun shining bright, a clap of thunder !

All the living things of the great earth open their eyes widely.<sup>1</sup>

All the myriad things of nature make obeisance;<sup>2</sup>  
Mount Sumeru, off its base, is dancing a polka.<sup>3</sup>

The next day, when he interviewed Getsurin, he wanted to tell him about it, but Getsurin asked him, "Where did you see the god? Where did you see the devil?" Mumon said "Kwatz !" Getsurin said "Kwatz !" and they kwatzed each other, ad infinitum, more or less. He composed a *jū*, 頌:

無 無 無 無 無  
無 無 無 無 無  
無 無 無 無 無  
無 無 無 無 無

Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu!  
Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu!  
Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu!  
Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu! Mu!

By the time he was thirty six, he was recognised as a monk with a future, and had visited a great number of prominent Zen masters. He wrote the *Mumonkan* at the age of forty six, when he was head monk of Ryūshōji Temple. At the age of sixty four, in 1246, he founded Ninnōji Temple. In his later years he retired, but was still sought after by learner-monks. The Emperor Risō invited him to the Palace, had him

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1. Gazing at me.

2. Do as I wish them to do, because I wish them to do what they are doing, have done, and will do.

3. Buddhism here returns to the former Hinduism, with the universe seen dancing.



preach, and offer up prayers for rain, from which we see that Mumon was also a time-server and a fool like the best of them. He received the name of Butsugen, "Buddha Eye," for this blind obedience to the powers that be. The records tell us, however, that he always wore poor garments, looked like a rakan, had no pride, but spoke succinctly and pointedly to everyone. He died at the age of seventy eight in 1260. His death verse was:

The Void is unborn,  
The Void does not perish.  
If you know the Void,  
You and the Void are not different.

Mumon was the 15th descendent of Rinzai, the eighth after Yōgi. Shinchi Kakushin<sup>4</sup>, went to China in 1249, and after visiting many famous monks met Mumon in 1253, at Ninnōji Temple, and became his descendent and conveyed the Rinzai Sect to Japan on his return to Japan in 1254. This is the first introduction of Mumon's teaching to Japan.

Where did Mumon get the Cases, the anecdotes from? Case 1, Jōshu's Mu, which is not only the first but the centre, the pith of the *Mumonkan*, Mumon got from his teacher Getsurin. From the *Hekiganroku*, which he does not mention in either his Preface or his Postscript, he could have got Case III, Gutei's Finger; Case XIV, Nansen's Cat-killing; Case XVIII, Tōzan's Three Pounds of Flax; Case XXXII, Buddha and the Non-buddhist. In the *Hekiganroku* these are respectively Case XIX, Case LXIII and LXIV, Case XII, and Case LXV. Case LX of the *Hekiganroku* is half that of *Mumonkan* Case XLVIII. However, it seems that Mumon got most of his stories from the *Gotōegen*, 五燈會元, by Reirin Fusai, which gives an account of the former Seven Buddhas, the twenty seven Indian Patriarchs, the Six Chinese Patriarchs,

4. Hōtō Kokushi.

and goes down to Tokusan, the 17th descendent of Nangaku. It was published in Japan in 1364, but the date of its publication in China is not certain. It was about the time of Mumon. Especially the apochryphal Case VI, the Buddha's Flower, comes from the *Gotōegen*. Case XXIII, Enō's Good and Evil, and Case XXIX, Enō's Flag, come from the *Rokusodangyō*. Other Cases must be from the *Keitoku Dentōroku*, 景德傳燈錄 by Dōgen (Taoyuan).<sup>5</sup> This also begins with the former Seven Buddhas, and goes down to Hōgen and his disciples, including about 1700 persons. It was completed in the first year of the Emperor Shinsō's reign, Keitoku, 1004, hence the title, *the Keitoku Transmission of the Lamp*. It consists of thirty volumes, the twenty eight to the thirtieth being records, verses, and so on, including the *Sandōkai*, the *Shinōroku*, the *Shinjimmei*, the *Shōdōka* and so on. It is the history of Zen up to the middle of the 10th century, and Mumon made use of this new work, added new anecdotes, and gave an original twist to his own book by basing the whole thing, spiritually speaking, on Mu. The order of the Cases, as Mumon tells us in his Preface, is quite at random. However, his placing the Mu as the first Case reflects the fact that Mumon himself gained his enlightenment through a desperate attack on it. But even so, each and any one of the Cases is the gateless gate to Zen, and thus there is no reason to systematise them or place one before another. —as Bashō said of all his haiku after *Furu-ike ya* when asked to write his death-verse.

The *Hekiganroku* is composed of Secchō's Hundred Cases and Verses, and Engo's Introductions, Comments, 著語, and Criticism; the *Shōyōroku* of Wanshi's Hundred Cases and Verses, and Banshō's Introductions, Comments, and Criticisms. The *Mumonkan* is a one-

---

5. There is a story that Dōgen stole the manuscript from Kōshin, when they were aboard the same ship, and published it in his own name. Kōshin said he didn't care anyway.

man show. By his criticism of the anecdotes he has himself chosen, he encourages us to be destructive towards our own ideals and imaginary powers, and at the same time attains thus a unity which the *Hekiganroku* and *Shōyōroku* cannot. Again, it is possible to be distracted by the literary value of the *Hekiganroku*, but the "poems" of the *Mumonkan* are only versified prose.

The forty eight Cases range from Sakyamuni, Kasyapa, Ananda, down to Shōgen and Wakuan, contemporaries of Mumon, covering about seventeen centuries, and have an extraordinary variety of content. It is the genius of Mumon, and the genius of Zen that there is so little uniformity and so much real internal contradiction in this short book, which is printed, in the original, with the additional matter at the end, on nineteen pages. But on these pages Inoue, for example, has written 1526 pages of explanation. The *Hekiganroku* occupies two hundred and fifty eight pages.

The *Mumonkan* was published in 1229, and republished eighteen years after. There is no record of when the *Mumonkan* was first brought to Japan, but in 1554 it was copied. It was published in 1632 and 1752. Before this, however, *Mumonkan Annotated* was published by Seisetsu Shōchō, who came from China of the Yuan Dynasty, in 1326. He lived in Kenchōji, Engakuji, Kenninji, Nanzenji and other temples. He returned to China in 1339. Thus the *Mumonkan* was already in Japan by the end of the Kamakura Period. All the many other commentaries on the *Mumonkan* were published during the period of flourishing scholarship in the Tokugawa Period, first in 1637, then 1648, 1650, and so on.

It is interesting to note that in *Contra Deum* (A Refutation of Christianity), 1620, 破提字子, *Hadeusu*, the author Fabian, an apo-apostasised Zen priest, refers to the *Mumonkan*, "The letter Mu is an iron barrier extending ten million leagues."

The *Mumonkan* is a text-book, a collection of ex-

ercises, questions in Zen. But if the question is a Zen question, and we understand it in the Zen way, we know the answer also, because the real answer to any question is the question really understood. The universe itself is an unspoken question. When we truly know what the universe is asking us, we don't need to answer. This is the meaning of Emerson's Sphinx. Thus, the *Mumonkan* is like everything else, a set of non-Zen, rational, non-non-sensical questions, until we realise that they are Zen questions, non-rational, non-sensical, and when we can see each problem in this poetical way we have already answered it. Mumon himself constantly tries to put us into this condition of mind in two ways; first, by denying something he has already asserted, or blaming someone for something which demands praise; second, and even more tantalisingly, by asking us to choose between two alternatives, putting us in a position where we cannot choose, but must.

However, strictly speaking, the aim of the *Mumonkan* is not this "state of mind," but enlightenment, a cutting of the Gordian knot of emotional and intellectual entanglements. This (sudden) enlightenment, and the "state of mind" enlightened by the perpetual contemplation of the problems of the *Mumonkan* are not the same. According to theory, to the orthodox order of events, satori comes first, and then the application of the satori to other problems, including the problems of practical life, but in actual fact being enlightened is no guarantee of any immediate or later improvement in character, view of life, or artistic judgement, not to speak of intellectual ability and power to detect fallacies and pseudo-poetic superstitions. Does a concentration on the forty eight Cases of the *Mumonkan* do this? I think so. Does "enlightenment" prevent this? I think so, to some extent, by putting such an "enlightened" person into a complacent state of mind, in which he "enjoys every day," and feels calm and undisturbed among screams of agony, physical and spiritual.

The *Mumonkan* should be a "set book" in every university in every country. Mumon, Ummon, Hyaku-jō and so on should be household names. Recently, a poll showed that the Japanese respect Abraham Lincoln above all "great men." It is difficult to approve of a man who was thinking of colonising the negroes, who conducted a war, and who put unification above all other things. I myself would choose, in this order, Bach, Bashō, Thoreau, Ummon, as the first four, with Shakespeare, Mozart, Wordsworth, Eckhart, Hakurakuten and others following. The order is the order of Zen.

## MUMONKAN

## PREFACE

(by Shūan)

說道無門，盡大地人得入。說道有門，無阿師分。第一強添幾箇注脚，大似笠上頂笠。硬要習翁贊揚，又是乾竹絞汁，著得這些哮喘。不消習翁一擲一擲。莫教一滴落江湖。千里烏騾追不得。

紹定 改元 七月 晦

習菴陳垣寫

"Mumon" may be explained as man entering freely into the whole great universe<sup>1</sup>. "Umon"<sup>2</sup> means that all the great teachers are unnecessary. In the first case<sup>3</sup>, some foot<sup>4</sup> notes are added, a hat put upon an (already unnecessary) hat. Old Man Shū was practically forced to write this complimentary Preface. It<sup>5</sup> was squeezing the sap out of a dried-up bamboo stick to produce a children's-book. Don't use it<sup>6</sup>, don't use it, for it will be yet another drop in the great lake<sup>7</sup>. Even the thousand-league Usui could not catch the words<sup>8</sup>.

The first year of Jōtei, 1228, July 30, written by Shūan Chinken<sup>9</sup>.

---

1. A sort of universalism, by which all men are saved effortlessly.

2. Mumon means "gateless"; Umon means "gateful".

3. If we take this as Mu, it means that we can understand and explain everything without help. Or, from Case I to Case XLVIII.

4. Like feet added to the snake.

5. The Mumonkan.

6. This Preface.

7. Which already has too much water in it. The metaphor is of the many mondō and kōan in the Zen world.



---

8. In the *Analects* it says, "A swift horse is not equal to the tongue." Once the book is published, the *Mumonkan*, irremediable harm will be done. Usui is the name of the famous steed of Kōu of the kingdom of So, 楚, who was defeated by Ryūho in the battle of Gaika. See Case X, the Verse.

9. Shūan was an official for some time, and then retired, spent his time landscape gardening, and became renowned as a scholar, something like Thomas Gray. At the same time he seems to have understood Zen pretty well, and, as he should, makes fun of the *Mumonkan*.



## MEMORIAL TO THE THRONE

紹定二年正月初五日，恭遇天基聖節。臣僧慧開，豫於元年十二月初五日，印行拈提佛祖機緣四十八則，祝延今上皇帝聖躬萬歲萬歲萬萬歲。皇帝陛下，恭願聖明齋日月，叡算等乾坤，八方歌有道之君，四海樂無爲之化。

慈懿皇后 功德報因佑慈禪寺 前住持傳法臣僧慧開 謹言。

We have arrived at January 5th, the 2nd year of Jōtei, 1229, a congratulatory day for Your Majesty. Your humble servant, monk Ekai, on December<sup>1</sup> the 5th last year published a commentary on Forty Eight Cases of the spiritual activities of the Buddha and the Patriarchs. I pray for the eternal health and prosperity of Your Majesty. I respectfully desire that Your Majesty's wisdom may become even more clarified day by day, and your life be as eternal as that of the universe itself. May all the Eight Directions sing the praises of your virtue, and The Four Seas take delight in your effective unmoving activity.

Written by Transmitter of the Law, citizen-monk Ekai, former Head Monk of Hōinyūji Zen Temple, built for the merit of Empress Jii.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Some versions say November.

2. Mother of the Emperor Risō. She seems to have been an awful kind of person in fact, and was said to be haunting the district as a kind of vampire. The temple was perhaps built to rest her turbulent spirit. The first head of it was Getsurin, Mumon's teacher.

# ZENSHŪ<sup>1</sup> MUMONKAN<sup>2</sup>

(The Gateless Barrier of the Zen Sect)

## PREFACE

(by Mumon)

佛語心爲宗，無門爲法門。既是無門，且作麼生透。豈不見道，從門入者，不是家珍，從緣得者，始終成壞。怎麼說話，大似無風起浪，好肉剜瘡。何況滯言句覓解會。掉棒打月，隔靴爬痒，有甚交涉。

Buddhism makes mind its foundation<sup>3</sup>. It makes No-gate its gate. If it is a No-gate, how can we pass through it? Have you not heard<sup>4</sup>, "Things that come in through the gate are not treasures<sup>5</sup>. What is gained as a result of cause and effect has a beginning and an end, and will be annihilated"<sup>6</sup>? Such remarks are like raising waves when there is no wind, or gouging a

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1. According to Chūhō (Chungfeng), a master of the Rinzai School, 1263-1322, "Zen is one's heart (mind); mind is our Zen. Zen and mind are two words for one thing."

2. Mumon is the monkish name of Ekai. Gensha said, "No-gate is the gate of salvation. No-meaning is the meaning of the walkers of the Way." Kan, barrier, was an expression used by Jōshū, Jōshū's Barrier. There was Ummon's One Letter Gate, 一字關, Kan is really the bar which closes the gate, the essential part of the gate.

3. So Zen Shū is called Busshin Shū, the Buddha-mind Sect.

4. Gantō said this to Seppō in a sermon.

5. Things bestowed upon us are not ours. Only self-created things really belong to us.

6. Only the unborn is deathless. Only the poetic is eternal.

wound into a healthy skin<sup>7</sup>. Those who rely on words, trying to strike the moon with a stick, scratching a shoe because they have an itchy place on the foot,<sup>8</sup>—what concern have they with reality?

慧開，紹定戊子夏，首衆于東嘉龍翔。因衲子請益，遂將古人公案，作敲門瓦子，隨機引導學者。竟爾抄錄，不覺成集。初不以前後叙列。共成四十八則，通曰無門關。

In the summer of the first Year Jōtei (Shōtō<sup>9</sup>), Ekai<sup>10</sup> was in Ryushō (Lunghsiang) in East China. As head monk he taught the learners there using the kōans of ancient masters like brickbats to batter at the gate, and leading the monks according to their special capacity. He wrote the kōans<sup>11</sup> down and they became an unwitting collection. From beginning to end there was no system in it<sup>12</sup>. The forty eight Cases<sup>13</sup> thus written down were called *Mumonkan*.

若是箇漢，不顧危亡，單刀直入。八臂那吒，攔他不住。縱使西天四七，東土二三，只得望風乞命。設或躊躇，也似隔窓看馬騎。眨得眼來，早已蹉過。

If anyone is a brave chap, he will cut his way through without a thought of the danger involved, and like the Eight-armed Nata<sup>14</sup> will be hindered by no one, but advance steadily. The four sevens<sup>15</sup> of the West and

7. This is taken from one of Ummon's sayings, and means talking unnecessarily, making a mountain out of a molehill.

8. This comes from a saying by Shishō.

9. 1228. Mumon was now forty six.

10. Mumon, the author.

11. Chūhō says that a kōan is an iron rule, that, like a national law, cannot be changed. There is a suggestion here of papal or biblical infallibility.

12. The forty eight cases are not arranged chronologically or in order of difficulty; it's all higgledy-piggledy.

13. Case, 則, is made up of shell, 貝, originally used as a kind of treasure, and 刀, sword.

14. Nata, the eldest son of Vaisravana, one of the twenty Devas, is a demon-king with three faces and eight arms.

15. Twenty eight Indian patriarchs.

the two threes of the East<sup>16</sup> will beg for their lives in his commanding presence. If anyone hesitates, however, he is like a man watching a horse gallop past a window. In the twinkling of an eye it is gone<sup>17</sup>. The verse<sup>18</sup> is:

大道無門      千差有路  
透得此關      乾坤獨步

The Great Way is gateless;  
There are a thousand alleys<sup>19</sup>.  
If once you pass the barrier,  
You walk alone<sup>20</sup> through the universe.

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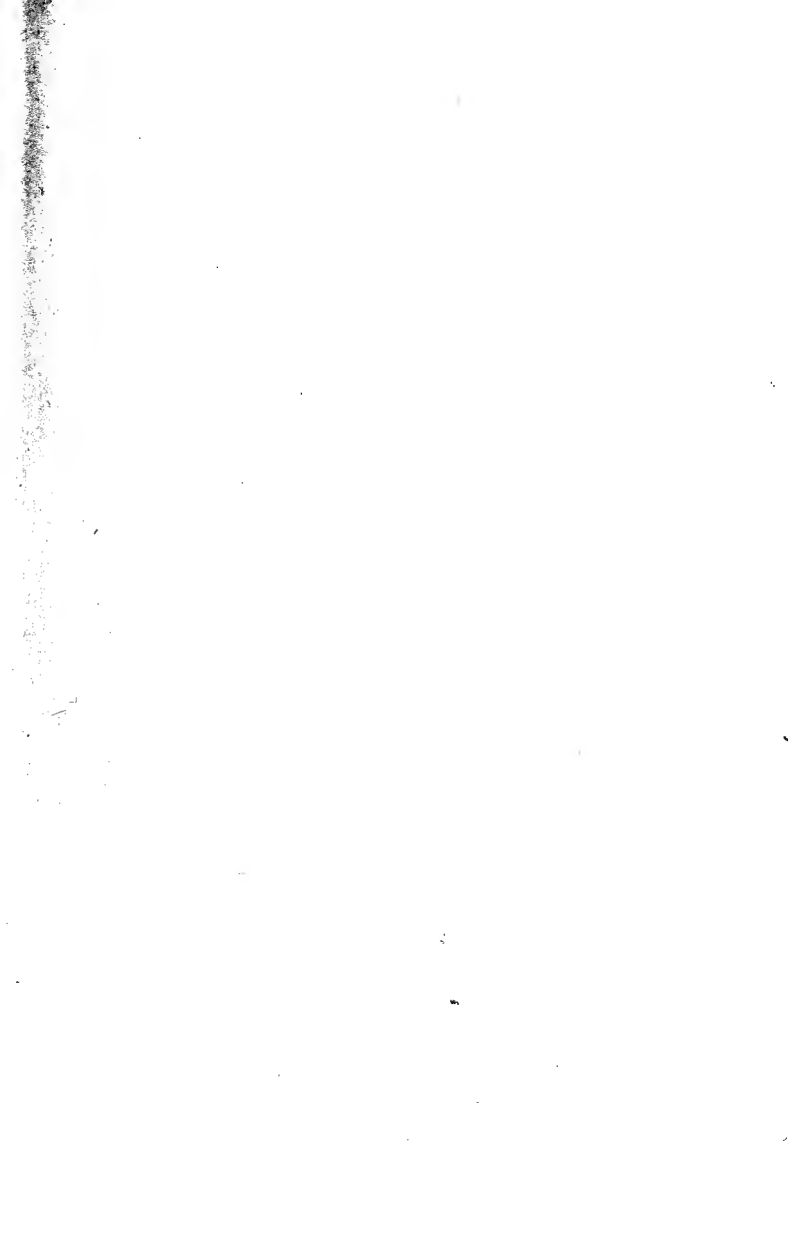
16. Six Chinese patriarchs.

17. This comes from a sermon by Mokugan.

18. Jū, 頌, gatha, also written 偈, ge.

19. All the things of the universe, and heaven and hell and illusion and enlightenment. These also are the Great Way, but you must go through the Gateless Gate to get to them.

20. But not lonely. Dr Suzuki translates the last line, "And in royal solitude you walk the universe."



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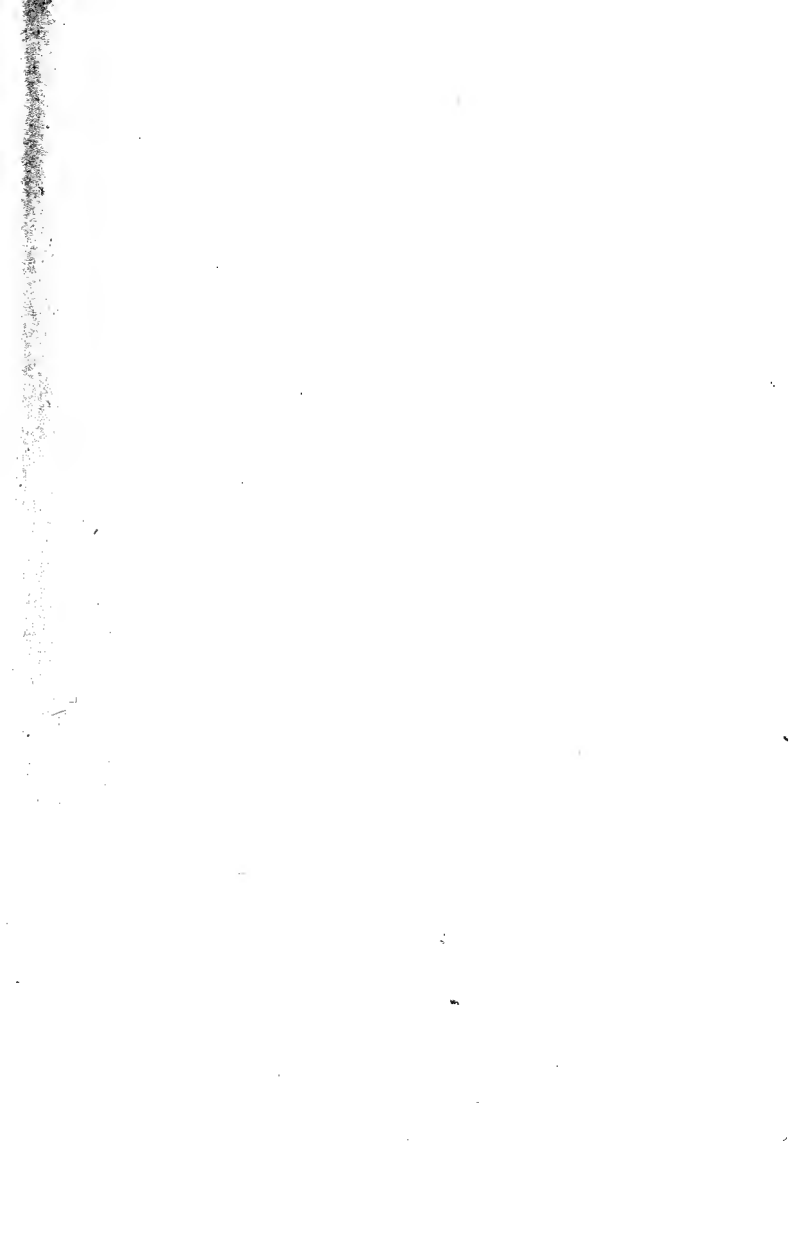
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· CASE I

Jōshū, by Sengai, 1750-1837

The inscription says:

The dog and his Buddha-nature—

Do not say he has none, mu.  
The breeze is blowing hard,  
And the gourd rattles, hanging  
on the eastern wall!

Dr. Suzuki writes of the last two lines:

Sengai's *Mu* is evidently a strange phenomenon in the shape of a gourd, quite a big one, I suppose, hanging on the eastern side of his residence, which makes a noise as the breeze passes over it in the late autumn days.

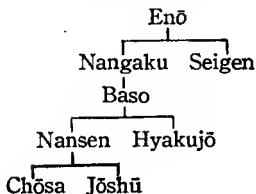
I would explain them in this way: "The dog has the Buddha nature,—the dog has no Buddha nature,"—This is only the (empty) intellect rattling against the (silent) wall of the Universe.





## Case I

### JŌSHŪ'S DOG



#### *Dramatis Personae*

The people in this case are two only, Jōshū and an unnamed monk.

It must be borne in mind from the beginning that all well-known monks have a minimum of four names:—

1. Their ordinary, lay name.
2. Their priestly name.
3. A name taken from the temple over which they presided (which is again taken from the mountain or place where the temple is situated).
4. A posthumous name or names.

Of course the Chinese pronunciation is again different. Jōshū's name is Jōshū Kwannon-in Jūshin, 趙州觀音院從諱. Jūshin is his priestly name; he lived in Kwannon-in, the name of a temple; this temple was in the south of Jōshū, the name of the province, and it is by this last name that he is generally known.

The lifetime of Jōshū (Chaochou) 778-897, corresponds in European history to the beginning of the reign of Charlemagne. In Japan, Kōbō Daishi was five years old. When Jōshū was eleven, Dengyō Daishi was founding Hiei Zan, 比叡山. These two both went to China when Jōshū was twenty seven.

Jōshū died at the great age of a hundred and twenty and outlived a great many of his contemporaries. It is often said that Jōshū became a priest at the age of sixty and went on a pilgrimage for twenty years, until,

at the age of eighty, he became head of Kwannon-in. The actual facts seem to be less unusual than this, namely: that he became a *shami*, 沙彌, as an orphan when young in Zuizo-in of Ryūkōji Temple, 龍興寺瑞像院. At the age of eighteen he went to Nansenzan, 南泉山, and studied Zen under Nansen Fugan<sup>1</sup>, who was four removes from the 6th Patriarch, ten from Daruma. When he first went to see Nansen, the following conversation ensued:

問曰，近離什麼處。師曰，近離瑞像。曰，還見立瑞像麼。師曰，不見立瑞像，只見臥如來。曰，汝是有主沙彌，無主沙彌。師曰，有主沙彌。曰，主在什麼處。師曰，仲冬嚴寒，伏惟和尚，尊體萬福。南泉器之，而許入室。（傳燈錄，卷十）

Nansen: "Where have you been lately?" Jōshū: "I have just come from Zuizo-in." Nansen: Have you seen the zuizo<sup>2</sup> standing there?" Jōshū: "No, I haven't seen a standing Zuizo, but I see a recumbent Tathagata"<sup>3</sup> Nansen: "Are you a Shami with a master, or a masterless one?" Jōshū: "One with a master." Nansen: "Where is your master?" Jōshū: "In spite of the intense cold of mid-winter, I am glad to see the master's worshipful body is blest with health."<sup>4</sup> Nansen, perceiving his latent ability, allowed him to practise Zen under his supervision.<sup>5</sup>

Nansen died in 834, when Jōshū was fifty seven years old. From the age of sixty to eighty, he was engaged in pilgrimages, not to holy places, but visiting all the famous masters of Zen, with which China was teeming at this time. Many of the incidents recorded in the

1. See Case XIV.

2. A zuizo is a peculiarly meaningful image of Buddha, especially referring to the first image made during his life-time, of sandalwood, by the King of Kausambi.

3. Nansen was evidently lying down at the time.

4. Implying by the speech, that he had already taken Nansen as his master.

5. Literally, allowed him to "enter the room," that is, to have private interviews with the master and express his understanding of Zen.

*Hekiganroku*, *Shōyōroku*, and *Mumonkan* no doubt belong to this period. In the one hundred Cases of the *Hekiganroku*, we have twelve concerning Jōshū; in the *Shōyōroku*, five; in the *Mumonkan*, seven. The story of his enlightenment is given in *Mumonkan*, Case XIX, and if the reader will glance also at Cases I, VII, XI, XIV, XXXI, XXXVII, he will get some idea of Jōshū's spiritual attitude. A few other anecdotes are given here.

The following is Jōshū's interview with Hyakujō, his spiritual uncle. After asking him where he had come from, and being told, from Nansen, Hyakujō asked, "Any message?" Jōshū answered, "Nansen said that a man who is still unenlightened is invariably dejected." At this Hyakujō uttered a loud "Kwatz!" and Jōshū looked frightened<sup>6</sup>. Hyakujō said, "Dejected, was well said<sup>7</sup>."

The following concerns Jōshū and Ōbaku<sup>8</sup>. When Ōbaku saw Jōshū he immediately went round to the Hall and bawled, "Fire! Fire!" Ōbaku rushed up to Jōshū, and seizing hold of him, cried, "Speak! Speak!" Jōshū coolly said, "The bow is drawn after the robber is gone<sup>9</sup>." Ōbaku suddenly released him and they both stood and laughed at each other.<sup>10</sup>

Rinzai came after Jōshū, considered lineally, but Jōshū nevertheless went to see him. Rinzai was washing his feet. Jōshū asked him, "What is the meaning of Daruma's coming from the West?" that is, what is the essence of Buddhism? This is the question solved by Rinzai when beaten by his master Ōbaku, and Jōshū

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6. It is difficult, at first, to understand this kind of thing, which seems either crazy or mere play-acting.

7. Hyakujō seems to be praising Jōshū for his "dejection," that is, for his looking frightened, irrespective of enlightenment or unenlightenment.

8. Huangpo, died 850.

9. The Chinese proverb corresponding to the English "Shutting the stable door after the horse has been stolen."

10. This is the pleasure of recognition, mutual recognition of their Buddha-nature.

probably asked it ironically. Glaring at Jōshū, Rinzai said, "At this moment, I am washing my feet<sup>11</sup>!" Jōshū leaned forward with the appearance of not hearing what Rinzai had said. Rinzai exclaimed, "Do you want a second ladle of dirty water poured over you?" and Jōshū went off.

The next anecdote concerns Jōshū and Tōsu, the sixth descendant from the Sixth Patriarch, on the Seigen side, spiritual son of Suibi. One day, on his way to Mount Tōsu, Jōshū passed an old man carrying an oil vessel, evidently going to buy oil at the foot of the mountain. When he got to the hermit's dwelling-place, no one was there. After waiting some time, the old man came back; evidently it was Tōsu himself. Jōshū said, "Tōsu's name is heard everywhere, but, coming here, I find no master of Zen, only an old man who has bought some oil." Immediately the old man held up the oil-pot, crying, "Oil! Oil!" Then ensued the conversation given in the *Hekiganroku*, Case XLI and the *Shōyōroku*, Case LXIII which follows.

趙州問投子，大死底人，却活時如何。子云，不許夜行，投明須到。

Jōshū said to Tōsu "The man who has suffered the Great Death—what kind of living activity is his?" Tōsu answered. "You can't go (back) in the dark, you have to wait till it's light."<sup>12</sup>

Both in character and life, Jōshū was a man of extreme simplicity. When, for example, the leg of a chair broke, he did not have it repaired in the proper way, but had a stake bound to it. One of his most famous sayings, not understood by one person in a hundred, is the following:

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11. This, of course, is Rinzai's answer to the question as to the meaning of Buddhism. He is not putting Jōshū off.

12. This can be taken as referring to Jōshū himself; or better, as a general statement. In any case, it represents Tōsu's beyond-death-and-life state.

When a sincere man expounds a mistaken doctrine, the doctrine becomes true. When an insincere man expounds a true doctrine it becomes error.

Again in the 9th Case of the *Hekiganroku* we have another example of Jōshū's inimitable simplicity:

僧問趙州，如何是趙州。州云，東門西門，南門北門。

A monk asked, "Who (or What) is Jōshū?"<sup>13</sup> Jōshū answered, "East Gate, West Gate, South Gate, North Gate."

That is to say, "If you want to come and see me, you can do so from any and every direction, all the gates are open, there is no concealment—in fact, it is all gate and nothing else!" So also with the 96th Case of the *Hekiganroku*, Jōshū's three problems:

趙州示衆三轉語。泥佛不渡水，金佛不渡鎚，木佛不渡火。

Jōshū gave out three problems to his monks. "A mud-Buddha cannot pass through water; a metal Buddha cannot pass the furnace; a wooden Buddha cannot pass through fire."

What is then the Buddha that can do this? But the best example, of a transcendent simplicity, is that of the 19th Case of the *Mumonkan* "Your everyday mind—that is the Way!" Outside this there is no Buddhism.

One last anecdote. A man of high rank named Ōyō came to ask for instruction in Zen. Jōshū said, "Having fasted from my youth, my body is already old, and I have not the strength to get off the chair to greet people." Then, remaining silent for a time, he said, "Do you understand?"<sup>14</sup> Ōyō did not understand pro-

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13. Who seems so cocksure of himself and different from everyone else.

14. This is, Do you understand the deeper meaning of my words? Do you see the "thusness of things" in what I say and do? Or changing the metaphor, Do you hear the voice of God?

perly, but, feeling the power of Jōshū's words, exclaimed "What a rare master you are truly." The next day he sent a servant, and Jōshū rose from his seat and greeted him. The head monk thought this very strange behaviour, and asked Jōshū why he treated the man of lower rank so ceremoniously. Jōshū said, "If a first-class man comes, I greet him from the chair. If a middle-class man comes, I arise. If a third-class man comes, I go outside the temple to greet him." This is greatness and simplicity indeed.

## THE CASE

趙州和尚因僧問，狗子還有佛性也無，州云，無。

A monk once asked Jōshū, "Has a dog<sup>15</sup> the Buddha-Nature?"

Jōshū answered, "Mu!" (No)

In the *Sayings of Jōshū*, 趙州語錄, from which this Case seems to be taken, we have a much fuller account.

僧問，狗子還有佛性也無。師云，無。僧云，蠢動含靈，皆有佛性。狗子因甚麼無。師云，爲他有業識性在。又一僧問師，狗子還有佛性也無。師云，有。僧云，既有，爲甚麼入這皮袋裏來。師云，知而故犯。

A monk asked Jōshū whether a dog had the Buddha nature or not. He said "No!" The monk said, "All creeping things with life have the Buddha-Nature; how can it be that the dog had not?" Jōshū answered, "You are attached to thoughts and emotions arising from karmic ignorance."<sup>16</sup> Again, a monk asked him, "Has a dog the Buddha-Nature, or not?" Jōshū answered, "Yes!" The monk said, "You say 'Yes' but

15. We may translate, "Has this dog...?" It is quite possible that the dog was present in the flesh.

16. "Ignorance" in Buddhism, means false, supposititious knowledge.

how did it (the Buddha-Nature) get into this skin-bag?" (the dog's body). Jōshū said, "Knowingly and purposely he sinned."

The account given in the *Shōyōroku*, Case XVIII, is practically the same, except that the "Yes" answer is put first and the "No" second. This, strangely enough, makes a great difference.

Jōshū's answer in the first part, "You are attached to thoughts and emotions arising from karmaic ignorance" seems to refer to a passage in *The Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*, 大乘起信論, part 3, Section 1.

不覺而起，能見，能現能取境界，起念相續。故說爲意。

When ignorance arises, we have discrimination of the objective world and attachment to it, and a continuous sequence of such thoughts and feelings results in our having a mind.<sup>17</sup>

此意復有五種名。云何爲五。一者名爲業識。謂無明力，不覺心動故。

This mind has five names, the first of which is karma-consciousness, that is to say, owing to the power of ignorance, unenlightenment begins its activity.

This means that the mind differentiates this and that, a dog and its nature, myself and the dog, the dog and the Buddha-Nature, my Buddha-Nature and the dog's Buddha-Nature,—yet with the faint consciousness,<sup>18</sup>

Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness....

that the differentiation is fictitious, for this unenlightenment is not pure.

In the second part, where Jōshū answers "Yes," when

17. That is, consciousness of self and otherness.

18. This is what Wordsworth is referring to in the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*.

the monk asks how the Buddha-Nature got into the body of the dog, Jōshū gives the orthodox Buddhist answer rather than that of Zen.

From the time that Buddhism was introduced into China, that is, with the arrival of Kasyapa Matanga (Mo-teng, Matō) and Gobharana (Chufalan, Jikuhoran) in 67 A.D., in the reign of Ming Ti, 58-76 A.D., the problem of the Buddha-Nature was a central one in religious discussion. The two terms taken separately mean something rather different from the combination. "Buddha," 佛, is enlightenment, release from life and death, freedom from karma, from the universal law of cause and effect, the state of uncreated indestructibility. "Nature," 性, means fixed and unchangeable, that is, the nature of potentiality of enlightenment and freedom from life and death. The "Buddha-Nature" has been interpreted variously in the different sects of Buddhism.

The Hosso Sect, Fahsiang, 法相宗, Dharmalakṣaṇa, was founded upon the return of Hsüan-chuang.<sup>19</sup> The foundation texts are the *Sandhi-nirmocana Sutra* 解深蜜經, the *Vijnaptimatratasiddhi-sastra*, 唯識論, (the doctrine that nothing exists apart from mind), and the *Yogacaryabhūmi-sastra*, 瑜伽師地論.

According to Anezaki, this school "aims at discovering the ultimate entity of cosmic existence in contemplation through investigation into the specific characteristics of all existence, and through the realisation of the fundamental nature of the soul in mystic illumination." The Hosso Sect taught that there are 5 natures, 五性:

1. 菩薩定性, of those who will become Buddhas.

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19. Hsüan-chuang, Genjō, 600-664, reached India in 633, and arrived back in China in 645, bringing with him six hundred and fifty seven Buddhist sutras and writings. He completed his famous *Record of Western Countries*, 大唐西域記, by 648. He was given Jionji Temple, 慈恩寺, in which to work, and the Hosso sect in also called the Jion Sect.



2. 緣覺定性, of those who will fall short of it.
3. 聲聞定性, of those satisfied with the state of a rakan.
4. 不定種性, with the potentiality to become 1, 2, or 3, but nature indefinite.
5. 無情有情種性, doomed to eternal rebirth.

From this five-fold classification, the Hosso Sect was also known as the Five Natures Sect, 五性宗. According to this view, only the first and fourth classes can have the Buddha-Nature. The 1st class enter by sudden enlightenment, 頓悟, the 4th by gradual enlightenment, 漸悟.

From the point of view of the Kegon, 華嚴, Hokke, 法華, and the Nehan, 涅槃, Sects, the above five-fold division is only the temporary or partial Mahayana, 權大乘, in contrast to the Final Mahayana of the Kegon and Tendai Schools, 實大乘.

The Tendai<sup>20</sup> (Tien-tai) Sect taught the identity of the absolute and phenomena. Universal Buddhahood was the special teaching of this Sect, being founded upon the *Nehangyō*,

一切衆生, 悉有佛性. (涅槃經, 第二十七卷)

All sentient things without exception have the Buddha-Nature.

Even the Icchantika, 闍提, the most abandoned character who seeks to destroy his own Buddha-Nature, cannot do so.

In the Kegon Sect<sup>21</sup> (Hua-yen) Avatamsa, the most important doctrine was that of the Dharma-Nature, 法性, by which name the sect was also called. The Dharmata, or Bhutatathata is conveniently defined by

20. Founder Chih-i, Chigi, 538-597. Introduced into Japan in 804 by Dengyō Daishi, 767-822.

21. Founded in China by Teishin Tojun (Ti-hsin Tu-shun) died 640. Entered Japan early in the Tang dynasty. The *Kegongyō* was first translated by Buddhahadra, who arrived in China in 406.

its synonyms, abiding dharma-nature, 法住; realm of dharma, 法界; inherent dharma or Buddha-Nature, 法定; embodiment of dharma, 法身; region of reality, 實際; reality, 實相; nature of the void, immaterial nature, 空性; appearance of nothingness, or immateriality, 無相; Bhutatathata, 真如; Tathagatagarbha, 如來藏; universal nature, 平等性; immortal nature, 離生性; impersonal nature, 無我性; realm of abstraction, 虛空界; nature of no illusion, 不虛妄性; immutable nature, 不變異性; realm beyond thought, 不思議界; mind of absolute purity, 自性清淨心; and last, the Buddha-Nature, 佛性. Not all the above definitions of the Dharma-Nature, however, coincide with what is meant by "Buddha-Nature," which implies a kind of inevitable potentiality of Self-realisation, that is, of the Dharma-Nature. In other words, the Buddha-Nature is the Dharma-Nature in its self-conscious aspect.

The problem of the Buddha-Nature, in Zen, did not originate with Jōshū. For example, at the beginning of the *Rokusodangyō*, when Enō was asked by the 5th Patriarch what he wanted, he answered, "I want to become a Buddha, that's all!" The 5th Patriarch then said, "You are from the people like wild dogs: how can such become Buddhas?" Enō answered, "People of the North and South differ as to their locality, but not as to their Buddha-Nature. There is no distinction to be made here."

Again, we have the following anecdote of Ikan, 755-817,<sup>22</sup> pupil of Baso.

問，狗子還有佛性否。師云，有。僧云，和尚還有否。師云，我無。僧云，一切衆生，皆有佛性，和尚因何獨無。師云，我非一切衆生。僧云，既非衆生，是佛否。師云，不是佛。僧云，究竟是何物。師云，不是物。僧云，可見可思否。師云，思之不及，議之不得。故云不可思議。（景德傳燈錄，第七卷）

Monk: "Has the dog the Buddha nature or not?"  
Ikan: "Yes," (有). Monk: Have you it or not?" Ikan:

22. Jōshū's dates are 778-897.

"I have not." Monk: "All existent creatures have the Buddha-Natures; how is it that you have not?" Ikan: "I don't belong to all existent creatures." Monk: "You say you don't belong to all existent creatures. This 'You,' is it a Buddha or not?" Ikan: "It is not a Buddha." Monk: "What sort of thing, in the last resort, is this 'You'?" Ikan: "It is not a thing." Monk: "Can it be perceived or thought of?" Ikan: "Thought cannot attain to it; it can not be fathomed. For this reason, it is said to be a mystery."

There is an interesting story concerning Nyoe, 744-823, also a pupil of Baso.<sup>23</sup>

崔相公入寺，見鳥雀於佛頭上放糞。乃問師曰，鳥雀還有佛性也無。師云，有。崔云，爲什麼向佛頭上放糞。師云，是伊爲什麼不向鶻子頭上放。（景德傳燈錄，第七卷）

As Saigun entered the temple, he noticed a sparrow making droppings on the head of an image of Buddha, and said to Nyoe, "Has the sparrow the Buddha-Nature or not?" Nyoe answered, "Yes!" Saigun said, "Then why does it make droppings on the head of Buddha?" Nyoe replied, "Does it make droppings on the head of a hawk?"

(That is to say, it is not devoid of discrimination as you suggest, and its Buddha nature manifests itself here, in this very acting according to circumstances.)

A still more interesting story is given by Katō, concerning Ōkeisho, a high official of the Tang Dynasty. He learned Zen first from Bokujū Dōshō, afterwards from Isan, and from Rinzai and others. One day he said to a monk, "Have all living creatures the Buddha-Nature or not?" The monk answered, "They have." Pointing to a picture of a dog painted on the wall, he asked, "Has this the Buddha-Nature or not?" The monk was nonplussed and could say nothing one way or the other.

Before giving the Christian answer to the question,

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23. Katō, Vol. I, page 66.

let me quote and criticise something which Katō says,<sup>24</sup> namely, that the problem here is not that of whether a dog has the Buddha-Nature or not, but whether we have it or not. Such an attitude is the same as that of St. Paul concerning the ox. "This was said not for the ox but for our sakes." The truth is that if you try to understand whether the dog has the Buddha-Nature, neglecting mankind, or try to understand whether man has the Buddha-Nature, neglecting the dog, you fail, and to that extent. When we come to consider the question of the Buddha-Nature of the dog from the point of view of Christianity, we see the deep gulf fixed between it and Buddhism. The fundamental problem, or rather, dogma of Christianity is the Divinity of Christ, that he was of a different nature from us. Modern Christian thought, however, tends towards the belief that we have, potentially, at least, the Divine Nature, and could, if pressed, admit this Divine Nature to other sentient creatures. In *Jesus, Man of Genius*, which may be taken as indicative of the direction in which Christian experience is slowly<sup>25</sup> moving, Middleton Murray says:

The Holy Ghost...was simply that part or power of God which abided with Jesus, or any man after his union with God. It was not God, for God was other than himself; it was not himself for it was other than he had been. It was the God who was henceforward in himself (p. 28).

He believed he was the son of God, in precisely the same sense as he believed all men to be sons of God. The difference between him and other men, in his eyes, was simply this: that he knew he was the son of God, while they did not (p. 37).

In regard to the special form of the present problem, "Has *the dog* the Buddha-Nature?" Christianity has no answer to give. What Christ's own answer to that

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24. Ibid, page 56.

25. It is worth remembering here, perhaps, that Buddhism is five hundred years older than Christianity.

question would have been we cannot even conjecture. It is more than possible that it was never raised in his mind. If he had been asked he might have answered, as he answered another question, "Of that knoweth no man, not even the Son, but the Father only." St. Paul, as pointed out just before, goes out of his way to deny the ancient Jewish sympathy with animals. This arose partly from a so-called primitive state of thought and vocabulary in which modern distinctions are obliterated. For example in Genesis 1. 24, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature" should be translated "living soul," animals and men being considered as sharing, in different degrees, in soul-nature. Again in Ecclesiastes 3. 21, "Who knoweth the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward?" Not only were the terms soul and spirit used indiscriminately of men and animals, but in early times no distinction seems to have been made between the soul and the body. In Numbers 6. 6, and Psalms 16. 10, the word translated "body" in the English, is in the Hebrew, "soul". But this equivocal state of thought and vocabulary, primitive though it may be, is one in which unity is still perceived. The meddling intellect has not yet succeeded in putting asunder what God hath joined.

Let us come back to the problem once more. A monk once asked Jōshū, "Has a dog the Buddha-Nature?" Jōshū answered, "No!" Jōshū's answer can be considered in two ways, first, in its relation to the monk and his particular state of mind and circumstances; second, as a transcendent expression of reality.

(a) What made the monk ask the question? I think we may say, because he half-anticipated the answer he got. When Pilate asked Christ, "What is truth?" he really meant, "I don't want to know what truth is; it is no doubt something very tiresome and disagreeable, so please don't tell me." This is why Christ was silent. In other words, a question contains, and must contain, more than half the answer. The monk's question should perhaps have the form, "Hasn't this dog the Buddha-

Nature?" He half suspected it hadn't—that is to say, that there was something suspicious about the ordinary understanding of the dog and its Buddha-Nature. As far as the words are concerned, the monk was right in suggesting that the dog had the Buddha-Nature, and the answer was "Yes!" but the monk was putting the wrong meaning into the right words, so Jōshū put the right meaning into the wrong words, to upset him, to shake him up. So, if a man says to me, "Aren't those lambs pretty little creatures?" I answer, "No!" because his meaning, with his mouth full of lamb cutlets, is not my meaning.

(b) This first case of the *Mumonkan*, treated as a kōan, is simply Mu and nothing else, with no reference to the monk or Jōshū or the dog or its Buddha-Nature. For this reason Inoue charges Zen monks with having perverted the original meaning. Based as this Case is upon the *Nirvana Sutra*, the question should be, "What is the Buddha-Nature?" Mumon put in only half the anecdote in order to concentrate upon the "Mu," but actually Jōshū says at another time, "U," that is, "Yes."

What Inoue says is in a way true, but in actual fact the Mu of Jōshū is not the No of Yes, No, but the No that transcends yet is identical with both. The two problems, that of Mu and of the Buddha-Nature, are two only in name.

Mu is used to reach the ground of one's nature, that is, the Buddha-Nature. Inoue's distinction is therefore intellectually valid, but experientially meaningless. If we know Mu, we know what the Buddha-Nature is; if we know what the Buddha-Nature is, we are in the state of Mu, the blessed state of the poor in spirit. It is a condition of the soul which we see unmistakably in Buddha and Christ, where we want nothing and yet want everything as it is, or rather, as it is becoming. We must have No *and* no, or Yes *and* yes, for Yes = No, but yes and no are opposite. Jōshū says at one time (Yes and) yes, at another time (No and) no. His Mu is No and no; his U is Yes and yes, so it doesn't

matter which he says, though they are not quite the same.

## THE COMMENTARY

參禪須透祖師關，妙悟要窮心路絕。祖關不透，心路不絕，盡是依草附木精靈。且道如何是祖師關。只者一箇無字，乃宗門一關也。遂目之曰禪宗無門關。透得過者，非但親見趙州，便可與歷代祖師，把手共行，眉毛厮結，同一眼見，同一耳聞。豈不慶快。莫有要透關底麼。將三百六十骨節，八萬四千毫竅，通身起箇疑團，參箇無字。晝夜提撕，莫作虛無會，莫作有無會。如吞了箇熱鐵丸相似，吐又吐不出。蕩盡從前惡知惡覺，久久純熟，自然內外打成一片，如啞子得夢，只許自知。驀然打發，驚天動地，如奪得關將軍大刀入手，逢佛殺佛，逢祖殺祖，於生死岸頭，得大自在，向六道四生中，遊戲三昧。且作麼生提撕。盡平生氣力，舉箇無字。若不間斷，好似法燭一點便著。

For the practical study of Zen, you must pass the barriers set up by the masters of Zen. The attainment of this mysterious illumination means cutting off the workings of the ordinary mind completely. If you have not done this and passed the barrier, you are a phantom among the undergrowth and weeds.<sup>26</sup> Now what is this barrier? It is simply "Mu", the Barrier of the Gate of Zen and this is why it<sup>27</sup> is called "The Gateless Barrier of the Zen Sect."

Those who have passed the barrier are able not only to have an intimate understanding of Jōshū, but also of the whole historic line of Zen Masters, to walk hand in hand with them, and to enter into the closest relation with them. You see everything with the same eye that they saw with,

26. Emotionality and intellection.

27. The entrance to Zen.

hear everything with the same ear. Is not this a blessed condition? Wouldn't you like to pass this barrier? Then concentrate your whole body, with its three hundred and sixty bones and joints, and eighty four thousand hair-holes, into this Question; day and night, without ceasing, hold it before you. But do not take it as nothingness, nor as the relative "not", of "is" and "is not." It must be like a red-hot iron ball which you have gulped down and which you try to vomit, but cannot.

All the useless knowledge, all the wrong things you have learned up to the present,—throw them away! After a certain period of time, this striving will come to fruition naturally, in a state of internal and external unity. As with a dumb man who has had a dream, you will know it yourself, and for yourself only. Suddenly your whole activity is put into motion and you can astonish the heavens above and shake the earth beneath. You are just as if you had got hold of the great sword of Kan-u. You meet a Buddha? You kill him! A master of Zen? You kill him!

Though you stand on the brink of life and death, you have the Great Freedom. In the four modes of the six rebirths you are in a state of peace and truth. Once more, how are you to concentrate on this Mu? Every ounce of energy you have must be expended on it; and if you do not give up on the way, another torch of the Law will be lighted.

In the phrase, the practical study of Zen, *sanzen*,



參禪, the word *san* is said to have three meanings: 1. to distinguish (truth from error.) 2. to have an audience (with a Master of Zen.) 3. to reach (the ground of one's being.) There is no explaining, philosophising, idealising, eccentricity. The character 禪, used to transliterate Dhyana, originally meant "to sacrifice to hills and fountains."

*Zen Masters* include the 28 Indian Patriarchs from Sakyamuni to Daruma, the 6 Chinese Patriarchs from Daruma to Enō, and all the succeeding Chinese and Japanese Masters up to the present day.

*Cutting off the workings of the ordinary mind.* The "road of the mind" is relativity for the intellect, likes and dislikes for the emotions. The mind sees everything under the form of this and that, here and there, is and is not, and to this the emotions add the colouring of gain and loss, desirable and undesirable, good and bad. But what kind of picture shall we see when form and colour are both removed? Eye hath not seen.... This is what passing the Barrier of Zen, *in this life*, means.

*A phantom among undergrowth and weeds.* According to ideas prevalent among the Chinese, some spirits go neither to heaven nor to hell, wandering about and feeding aimlessly on garbage. This is the condition of the man who feeds on the newspapers, on murders and wars and rumours of war, who rejoices when his side wins and whose life becomes meaningless when it loses. When you have passed the Barrier, you "rejoice in the truth," you "rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn." In everything you see the working of One Mind. But if you have not passed the Barrier, your mind is ghostly; hoping and fearing, there is no balance, no immovable point of activity.

*Three hundred and sixty bones, etc.* Mistakes of science are just as unimportant in Buddhism as in Christianity. Mistakes of psychology—that is quite another matter. The above has, of course, the meaning of "with all your heart and soul and strength."

*This Question* is the problem of the Buddha-Nature,

that is, of Mu.

*Useless Knowledge*, literally, bad knowledge, is really *unused* knowledge. If any organ of the body, or matter taken into it, is not used, disease at once supervenes. So all the accumulated head knowledge, dogmas (religious and otherwise), principles of morality, theories of life, unless put into practice, are worse than useless. They are bad, they rot the mind.

*If you meet a Buddha, kill him! a master of Zen, kill him!* This killing of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs in Zen is in marked contrast to the attitude of the other Buddhist sects and to that of Christianity. The Buddha, conceived as Something, apart from ourselves, becomes, like Christ, an enemy of mankind, public enemy number one—all the more because he is righteous and worthy of imitation, for imitation is death.<sup>28</sup>

Kan-u, who died in 220 A.D., is the Chinese Mars. His sword was called Green Dragon. He was a hero of the Three Kingdoms, had a beard one foot eight inches long and was said to be 9 feet 5 inches tall. He appears in the Japanese Boys' Festival. The adept of Zen is compared to this man because he went about doing as he liked—this being due to his physical and spiritual strength. So the Zen man, feeble in body and poor in spirit, is master of every situation. Whoever plays, God always wins, Nature never loses. This is the *Thusness of Things* with which he is identified. His strength is such that he lifts the sun above the Eastern hills and drops it slowly below the horizon at dusk. He turns the globe itself, yet makes the duck's legs short and crane's legs long.

*The Four Modes of the Six Rebirths.* The six rebirths, or conditions of sentient existence, called also the six Directions of Reincarnation, are the following: the hells,

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28. Compare the attitude of the old Norse heroes, Beowulf, Fotho, Ragnar Lodbrog, Harald Hardrade. "I never on earth met him whom I feared, and why should I fear him in heaven? If I met Odin I would fight with him. If Odin were the stronger he would slay me; if I were the stronger I would slay him."

the hungry ghosts, animals, Asura or malevolent nature spirits, human existence, devas or gods. The four forms of birth are: viviparous (men and mammals); oviparous (birds, snakes, tortoises insects); from moisture (larvae, earthworms); metamorphic (lice from dirt, fireflies from rotted grass, eels from wild potatoes). Buddhas, Bosatsu, and Rakan were supposed sometimes to become beasts and insects, much as Dante put Popes in the Inferno. Here the meaning of "the four modes of the six rebirths" is simply, under all circumstances, all "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

*A state of peace and truth.* This is a translation of the Sanskrit word *Vikridita*, to roam for pleasure, and means the supernatural powers in which Buddhas and Bodhisattvas indulge. For Zen, the expression denotes something childlike, artless, unselfconscious—one might almost say, un-Buddhistic—the life and mind of a man like Ryōkan.

*Samadhi* means composing the mind, holding it undisturbed, so that a knowledge of the truth may arise spontaneously in it. Compare Wordsworth:

Think you, of all this mighty sum  
Of things forever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?

The universe, for all its ceaseless activity, is motionless in its essence, and the mind whether on the battlefield or in the complexities of philosophic thought, is to share in this repose. It also implies correct sensation of the contemplated object. In this sense it is the state of mind of the poet, who alone sees things as they really are.

The whole of this relatively long commentary may be summarised thus:

1. The Master's Barrier must be passed by cutting off emotionality and sophistication.
2. In so doing, you see and hear what the greatest men of the past saw and heard.

3. This means the unification of the microcosm and the macrocosm through Mu.
4. The result is the childlike happiness of perfect freedom.
5. To attain this state, unremitting effort is needed, but persistence will end in the birth of yet another living witness to the truth.

## THE VERSE

狗子佛性	全提正令
纔涉有無	喪身失命

The dog! The Buddha-Nature!

The perfect manifestation, the command of truth.

If, for a moment, you fall into relativity,  
You are a dead man!

Jū, 頌, means to praise, and is the metrical part of a sutra. This is usually taken as the translation of the word *gatha*, written also 伽陀, or 伽他. We have for example the most famous of all verses, the Gatha of three fundamental dogmas of Buddhism, 緣起(法)頌, that all is suffering, that suffering is intensified by desire, and that extinction of desire is practicable. It is placed in the foundations of pagodas, and the inside images of Buddha, and so is called the Dharma-kaya Gatha. Mumon follows the *Hekiganroku* in summing up the case and its commentary in a verse.

The first two lines are rather difficult. *The dog! The Buddha-Nature!* implies the identity of the dog and the Buddha-Nature; but when this fact is asserted, the fact somehow disappears. The words, as ordinarily understood by ordinary, that is, unenlightened people, cloud and dim the truth. The same words, when Mumon says them, become also identified with the fact. They

do not reveal it or symbolise it, but become conterminous with it through the agency of Mumon's living activity, in non-separation with the living fact asserted in the line. The validity of truth is dependent upon the man who speaks it, or hears it.

The second line, *The perfect manifestation, the command of truth*, expresses two important Zen dogmas. First, that when one thing is brought up, everything is brought up. The lily of the fields, in the hands of Christ, is the universe as a living growing thing. ("How they grow.") But, "in the hands of Christ," "in the mouth of Mumon"—this is the important point. Second, that statements are defective compared with commands. A statement is dogmatic and limited, passive, descriptive, outside. The imperative form, full energy and impetuosity, is what Blake had in mind when he said "No man can see truth without believing it." There is a "must" about truth, which again is the psychological origin of Kant's categorical imperative, by which ethics (the "ought" and "must") are charged with the obligation of solving metaphysical problems. From the point of view of Zen, we may say that Nature commands everything, states nothing, and when we command (not, obey, which means, state) all that Nature commands, we are Buddha.

The last two lines are clear. "Falling into relativity," is acting with the motive of gain and loss, yours and mine; the world outside and the world inside separated. When the outer and inner worlds are experienced as one, when complete self-consciousness is unaware of the two entities, myself and God, this is the original unity. Once I and the other are differentiated, all other relativities spring naturally into being. Moments of unity, whether emotional or intellectual, aesthetic or moral, remind us of this unity, and convey

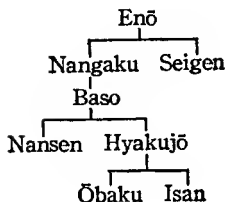
A melancholy into all our day.

In conclusion, it must be clearly grasped that the truth is not mere addition, the adding together of two

pairs of relatives. 無 is one half of the universe and 有 is the other half, but the two halves do not make a whole, but something far less. Has the dog the Buddha-Nature? The dog is Mu, the Buddha-Nature is Mu, No-dog is Mu, the devil-nature is Mu, all is Mu !

## Case II

### HYAKUJŌ'S FOX



#### *Dramatis Personae*

Hyakujō's name, as a monk, was Ekai. He was born in 720 and died in 814. He became a priest in his early youth and afterwards an unsui<sup>1</sup>. His enlightenment, at the hands (quite literally) of Baso, is told in the 53rd Case of the *Hekiganroku*.

馬大師與百丈行次，見野鴨子飛過，大師云，是什麼。丈云，野鴨子。大師云，什麼處去也。丈云，飛過去也。大師遂扭百丈鼻頭。丈作忍痛聲。大師云，何曾飛去。

Baso was out walking, accompanied by Hyakujō. They saw some wild ducks flying past and Baso said, "What are they?" Hyakujō answered, "Wild ducks." Baso said, "Where are they going to?" Hyakujō replied, "They are flying away." Baso tweaked Hyakujō's nose, and he cried out with the pain. "Where have they gone to?" asked Baso.

If we take this as an innocent conversation on Hyakujō's part, with Baso suddenly wrenching his nose, the story becomes incoherent and any enlightenment inconceivable. When Hyakujō is asked "Where are they

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1. Literally, cloud-water, 雲水, that is, wandering, homeless monks; but used rather as meaning monks as yet unattached to a special temple and engaged in the practical study of Zen.

going?" he gives an answer in Zen. He says, "They are just going. They have not come from anywhere; they are not going anywhere. They are just flying." This is perfectly correct, though only a student of Zen could see it. But only a Master of Zen would know what was wrong with it—or rather, what was wrong with the speaker. Hyakujō was, so to speak, walking round the pool describing it accurately; but Baso pushed him in, and then he knew what it was really like. The story is continued in the Commentary.

馬祖次日陞堂。衆纔集，百丈出卷却拜蓆。馬祖便下座，歸方丈。次問百丈，我適來上堂，未曾說法，你爲什麼便卷却蓆。丈云，昨日被和尚扭得鼻孔痛。祖云，你昨日向甚處留心。丈云，今日鼻頭又不痛也。

The next day Baso ascended the pulpit and the monks had barely assembled when Hyakujō came forward and rolled up the praying-cloth. Baso at once came down and went back to his own room. He said to Hyakujō, "What do you mean by rolling up the praying-cloth when I had gone into the Hall and not even begun to preach?" Hyakujō said, "Yesterday you pulled my nose, and it hurt." Baso asked, "Where had you fixed your mind yesterday?"<sup>2</sup> Hyakujō replied, "My nose doesn't hurt to-day."

Hyakujō does not of course mean that today his nose has become unhurttable—far from it. He is not stating a general truth, nor is he avoiding answering it. He just says, "My nose doesn't hurt today," and when he says this, he says all ye say on earth and all ye need to say. It is the answer to Pilate's question, "What is truth?" The answer is, "My nose doesn't hurt to-day."

To continue with the life of Hyakujō; later, when

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2. We might translate this, "Where was your treasure yesterday?" Hyakujō is not to be tricked into trying to answer this (verbally unanswerable) question.



he again put himself under Baso, Baso once uttered a *Kwatz!* 喝, which rendered him deaf and blind for three days 直得三日耳聾眼暗. He went to Daichi monastery, 大智院, on Daiyū Mountain, 大雄山, and many disciples gathered around him. This mountain was very precipitous, rising above the clouds, and became known as Hyakujō San, 百丈山, that is, hundred-pole mountain, and from this Hyakujō received the name he is remembered by. His most famous saying is, "A day of no working is a day of no eating," 一日不作, 一日不食, reminding us of Paul's command, "that if any would not work, neither should he eat." Hyakujō carried this out so consistently that when, in extreme old age, the monks hid his gardening tools, he offered no remonstrance, but refused to eat. It was Hyakujō who first instituted the Zen temple as such, nearly three centuries after the coming of Daruma. He drew up the regulations for the Zen monk's life, recorded in a book called *Pure Rules for the Zen Monastery*, 禪苑清規, now unfortunately lost. But the life of a Zen monk in Japan today preserves for us the main lines of Hyakujō's foundation, and it is worth remarking here that as far as the details also are concerned, it is astonishing how, though regulated and fixed to the minutest detail, everything, every movement of hand and foot represents the best possible that can be imagined. The most critical and fault-finding mind can see nothing to quarrel with. Everything is at once labour saving and expressive. However, it meant the death of the very Zen it preserved.

The Three Great Masters, 三大師, are Hyakujō, Jōshū, and Nansen, though I think Ummon greater than these three. Hyakujō comes again in Case XL of the *Mumon-kan*, and in relatively few of the *Hekiganroku*, but as the spiritual son of Baso, father of Isan and Ōbaku, and grandfather of Rinzai he occupies one of the most important positions in the history of Zen.

Ōbaku's name as a monk was Kiun. He gave birth to a sect known after him, the Ōbaku Sect, the last to

arrive in Japan<sup>3</sup> where it is now the smallest and least influential of the three, Rinzai, Sôtō, and Ōbaku. The date of his birth is not recorded, but he died in 850. He became a priest in Kenpukuji, 建福寺, afterwards known as Manpukuji, 萬福寺, situated on Ōbaku San, 黃檗山.

Later Ōbaku went to a temple named Daianji, 大安寺, at Shūhō, 鷲峰, and named this mountain "Ōbaku San" from affection to his native place. From this he himself received the name he is known by.

黃檗示衆云，汝等諸人，盡是噉酒糟漢。恁麼行脚，何處有今日。還知大唐國裏無禪師麼。時有僧出云，只如諸方匡徒領衆，又作麼生。檗云，不道無禪，只是無師。

Ōbaku said to the congregation of monks, "You are all, every one of you, feeding on the draff of wine. However you may go on pilgrimages,—what is your (real) position today? Don't you know that in the whole of China, there is not a single Master of Zen?" At this time a certain monk came forward and said, "How about those who in various parts (of China) are training their disciples and leading their followers [into truth]?" Ōbaku answered, "I don't say there is no Zen, only that there are no teachers of it."

When we know what Zen is, we see it everywhere (and what is everywhere, is nowhere). How shall we point to it, when it is in the very finger with which we are pointing?

Another anecdote is the very brief continuation of the story of Hyakujō's enlightenment at the hands of Baso, and being made deaf for three days.

後黃檗來參，遂聞舉此吐舌。

Afterwards, when Ōbaku came for instruction, this story was repeated to him. When he heard it he stuck out his tongue.

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3. Brought by Ingen, 1592-1673, who arrived at Nagasaki in 1654.

This independence of mind, at the opposite pole of conceit or contempt, is shown also in the following:

初到百丈。丈問云，巍巍堂堂，從什麼處來。槩云，巍巍堂堂，從嶺中來。丈云，來爲何事。槩云，不爲別事。百丈深器之。  
(碧巖錄十一，評唱)

When he first went to see Hyakujiō, Hyakujiō asked him, "Where have you come from in that stately way?" Ōbaku answered, "In this stately way, I have come from Reichu." Hyakujiō asked, "What did you come for?" Ōbaku answered, "Nothing special." Hyakujiō deeply appreciated the capacity [for Zen shown in his answer].

We see the same thing again in the relation between Ōbaku and his spiritual son and heir, Rinzai, who, when he became enlightened through being struck by Ōbaku, exclaimed,

元來黃槩佛法無多子。(臨濟錄)

"Now I see Ōbaku's Buddhism is nothing much!"

There is one more anecdote from *Records of Rinzai*, 臨濟錄 which shows the roughness, directness, and practicality which are still characteristic of the Rinzai School of Zen.

一日普請次，師在後行。黃槩回頭，見師空手，乃問，鑿頭在什麼處。師云，有一人將去了也。黃槩云，近前來，共汝商量箇事。師便近前。黃槩豎起鑿頭云，祇這箇，天下人拈掇不起。師就手掣得豎起云，爲什麼卻在某甲手裏。黃槩云，今日大有人普請。便歸院。(臨濟錄，行錄)

One day all the monks were out working.<sup>4</sup> Rinzai had followed Ōbaku out, and the latter looking round,

4. *Fushin*, 普請, originally meant, as the words show, "asking all" (the monks to come out to work). It then became applied, as above, to the work itself, to the digging, planting, building etc., of the whole body of the monks.

noticed Rinzai with empty hands, and thereupon asked him, "Where is your hoe?" Rinzai replied, "Somebody's taken it away!" Ōbaku said, "Come over here; I want to talk about it with you." So Rinzai went up to him. Ōbaku lifted up his hoe, and said, "Just this! and all the creatures under heaven are unable to catch hold of it and hold it up!" Rinzai snatched it from him and raised it aloft, exclaiming, "How is it that it is now in my hands?" Ōbaku said, "One man has done a rare bit of work [*fushin*] today," and went back into the temple.

To get some intellectual understanding of the above story, we may consider it as if told of someone like Bishop Berkeley. If he were asked, "Where is your hoe?" He would have considered it, philosophically, in much the same way as Rinzai and Ōbaku did. What is a hoe? What is "I"? What does it mean, "I have a hoe," "I have no hoe." Have I the hoe, or does the hoe have me? Is it possible both to have and not to have the hoe, at one and the same time? But it is precisely all this that Ōbaku is unteaching Rinzai. To teach Zen means to unteach; to see life steadily and see it whole, the answer not divided from the question; no parrying, dodging, countering, solving, changing the words; an activity which is a physical and spiritual unity with All-Activity. This was the piece of work that Rinzai did which satisfied Ōbaku.

## THE CASE

百丈和尚凡參次，有一老人，常隨衆聽法，衆人退老人亦退。忽一日不退。師遂問，面前立者，復是何人。老人云，諾，某甲非人也。於過去迦葉佛時，曾住此山。因學人間，大修行底人，還落因果也無，某甲對云，不落因果。五百生墮野狐身。今請和尚代一轉語，貴脫野狐。遂問，大修行底人，還落因果也無。師云，不昧因果。老人於言下大悟。作禮云，某甲已脫野狐身，住在山後。敢告和尚，乞依亡僧事例。師令維那白槌告衆，食後送亡僧。大衆言議，一衆皆安，涅槃堂又無人病，何故如是。食後只見，師領衆至山後巖下，以杖挑出一死野狐，乃依火葬。師至晚上堂，

舉前因緣。黃蘗便問，古人錯祇對一轉語，墮五百生野狐身。轉轉不錯，合作箇甚麼。師云，近前來，與伊道。黃蘗遂近前，與師一掌。師拍手笑云，將謂胡鬚赤，更有赤鬚胡。

Whenever Hyakujō delivered a sermon, a certain old man was always there listening to it together with the monks; when they left the Hall, he left also. One day, however, he remained behind, and Hyakujō said to him, "Who may you be?" The old man replied, "Yes; I am not a human being. In the far distant past, in the time of Kashō Buddha<sup>5</sup>, I was the head monk here. On one occasion a certain monk asked me whether an enlightened man could fall again under the chain of cause and effect, and I answered that he could not. Thus I have for five hundred lives been reborn a fox. I now beg you to release me from this rebirth by causing a change of mind through your words." Then he asked Hyakujō, "Can an enlightened man fall again under the chain of cause and effect or not?" Hyakujō answered, "No one can set aside (the law of) cause and effect." The old man immediately became enlightened, and making his bows, he said, "I am now released from rebirth as a fox and my body will be found on the other side of this mountain. I wish to make a request of you. Please bury me as a dead monk." Hyakujō had the *karmadana*<sup>6</sup>, or deacon,

5. Kashō Buddha is the sixth of the seven ancient Buddhas, Sapta-Buddha, 七佛, which are:—Vipasyn, 毘婆尸; Sikhin, 尸棄; Visvabhu 毘舍浮; Krakucchanda 拘留孫; Kanakamuni 俱那含牟尼; Kasyapa, 迦葉; and Sakyamuni.

6. Ino, 維那, is an interesting example of how the special vocabulary of Zen came into existence. The Sanskrit is *karmadana*, 羯磨陀那, director of monks, one of the three bonds, 三綱, or directors

beat the clapper<sup>7</sup> and informed the monks that after the midday meal<sup>8</sup> there would be a funeral service for a dead monk. The monks thought this odd, as all were in good health, nobody was in the hospital,<sup>9</sup> and they wondered what the reason could be for this order. After they had eaten, Hyakujō led them to the foot of a rock on the farther side of the mountain, and with his staff poked out the dead body of a fox and had it cremated.

In the evening Hyakujō ascended the rostrum in the Hall and told the monks the whole story. Ōbaku thereupon asked the following question: "This old man made a mistake in his answer, and suffered reincarnation as a fox five hundred times,

of a monastery: 1. Sthavira, 上座, president. 2. Viharasvamin, 寺主, abbot, who directs the temporal affairs. 3. Karmadana, also called 知事, and 授事, director of duties, one who gives out the work. Karma means religious duty, especially, a meeting of the monks for ordination, absolution, or excommunication. The last syllable of karmadana, the sound-translation of the Sanskrit word is joined to the second character of Kō-i 綱維, (both characters mean a bond,) which is the meaning-translation. This gives us Ina, or, as pronounced here, Ino.

7. The clapper, byaku, 白, means to make known. The tsui-chin consists of the chin 碁, an octagonal post, struck by an octagonal rod, the tsui, 鎚. The sound is like that of the kinuta, 碁, the fulling-block, famous in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese poetry.

8. The midday meal. The expression "after eating," 食後, means after the midday meal, since in the morning o-kayu, 粥, a kind of rice gruel, is eaten; at 10 o'clock, midday, rice. There is supposed to be no meal after this, following the Indian custom, so the evening meal is called "medicinal treatment," 藥石.

9. The hospital is literally Nirvana Hall, 涅槃堂, so called because sickness leads to death and death leads (should lead) to Nirvana. However, to the average monk, the prospect of a speedy death, even as the gate of bliss, was not found conducive to recovery, and the name was changed later to Enjudō, 延壽堂, with precisely the opposite meaning, "Prolonging Life Hall."

you say. But suppose every time he answered he had not made a mistake, what would have happened then?" Hyakujō replied, "Just come here to me, and I'll tell you the answer!" Ōbaku then went up to Hyakujō—and boxed his ears. Hyakujō, clapping his hands and laughing, exclaimed, "I thought the barbarian had a red beard, but here is another one with a red beard!"

The doctrine of karma, from the Hinayana point of view, is very difficult to expound. Suzuki says,

Taking all in all, however, there is much obscurity in the doctrine of Karmaic continuity, especially when its practical working is to be precisely described; and theoretically too, we are not sure of its absolute tenability.<sup>10</sup>

From the Mahayana point of view, however, the emphasis is laid on another part of the problem, that is, how can we have law, *and* freedom, how can we be delivered, in this life, from the universal, unescapable law of cause and effect. Towards the end of the *Song of the Path of Enlightenment*, Yōka Daishi<sup>11</sup> says,

了則業障本來空，未了還須償宿債。

When we understand fully (that the forms of things are not their reality), the karmaic hindrances are intrinsically void.

If we do not understand, all our karma-debts must

10. *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, 2nd Series, p. 238.

11. Known as 一宿覺, literally, "one lodging Kaku (enlightened man)," because the 6th Patriarch, in admiration of his understanding of Zen, asked him to spend the night with him. Just as the 6th Patriarch became spontaneously enlightened through hearing the *Kongōkyō*, 金剛經, so Gengaku (Yōka Daishi) became independently illuminated by reading the *Yūimakyō*, 維摩經. He died in 713.

be redeemed (i.e. we are bound to circumstances and must follow them.).

Compare this to what the elder Mr. Weller says in *Pickwick Papers* in regard to death being necessary for undertakers, an illustration of Emerson's doctrine of Compensation. Again, towards the beginning of the *Song of Enlightenment* we have:

證實相無人法，剎那滅卻阿鼻業。

When Truth is realised, individual men and things cease (to appear as real entities),  
And instantly our Hellish<sup>12</sup> Karma is destroyed.

Katō<sup>13</sup> quotes Gubu's<sup>14</sup> question to Chōsa Keishin<sup>15</sup> concerning the statement of Yōka Daishi. He asks, "If upon enlightenment, Karmaic hindrances are void, how was it that Aryasimha,<sup>16</sup> and the 2nd Patriarch<sup>17</sup> had to redeem their karma-debts?" That is to say, if it is true that a man who becomes finally enlightened is raised above the law of cause and effect, how is it that such a man still suffers the effects of his deeds in a past life?

In the 9th chapter of the Gospel of St John, we have a very similar question put by the disciples to Christ himself.

And as He passed by He saw a man blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying,

12. 阿鼻旨, Avici, the last and deepest of the eight hot-hells, where culprits suffer, die, and are instantly reborn to suffer, without interruption.

13. Page 131.

14. A disciple of Chōsa Keishin. See Case XLVI.

15. See Case XII, The Verse.

16. The 24th (Indian) Patriarch; a Brahman by birth, he laboured in Kashmir, where he was martyred, 259 A.D.

17. The 2nd Patriarch, Eka, was beheaded upon the instigation of a rival sect. See Case XLI.



"Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?"

This is an interesting passage, for from it we see that the Jews in general, and the disciples in particular, were not so ignorant of the various theories and explanations of religious problems as people sometimes suppose. Again, in the Apocrypha, The Wisdom of Solomon 8. 20, we have, "Nay rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled." Christ gives the Zen, not the orthodox Buddhist answer:

"Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

Chōsa's answer to his disciple is:

假有本非有，假滅亦非無，涅槃與償債，義一性不異。

Temporary existence is not (real) existence.

Temporary destruction is not Mu.

Nirvana and paying off old scores of Karma—

These two have one nature, not two.

Chōsa, like Christ, calls people away from the relative, explanatory, time-world of cause and effect, into the world of the spirit, the world of Mu. And this does not mean, calls us away from this world to another, ideal, perfect world. As Christ himself says, "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This cup is the cup of Karma: all depends on the willingness with which we drink it. If we drink it as the cup which the Father has given us, it is the water of eternal life.

Dōgen<sup>18</sup> says of this answer of Chōsa, that it is no answer, 長沙のこたへはこたへにあらず. Of what answer is

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18. Founder of Eihei-ji, principal temple of the Sōtō Sect. Posthumously named Shōyō Daishi in 1880. Born in 1200, went to China in 1223, returned in 1228 and died 1253.

this not true? It is all *Mu! Mu! Mu!* The glory of God! The glory of God! and nothing else.

We can now come to the Case itself. It is quite clearly a little drama arranged by Hyakujō for the edification of his monks. We may suppose that what happened was this. One day while out for a walk, Hyakujō noticed a dead fox lying under a rock. Up to that time whenever there was a sermon or a general meeting for zazen, a certain old man had been present, but on the last occasion, that very day, he had stayed behind and asked Hyakujō concerning the real nature of karma and how we can escape from it; and when he had asked, "Is not cause and effect also void and empty," Hyakujō had answered, "The law of cause and effect cannot be set aside" (Christ's, "I came not to destroy but to fulfil") and the old man had become enlightened. Connecting, in his mind, by a bold piece of comparison, the old man's previous unenlightened condition, with the dead body of the fox before him, Hyakujō constructed a little kindergarten play for his monks. Knowing, like a very good teacher, the value of an object lesson and the importance of the class's taking active part in the lesson, he went back and gave orders for a funeral. The monks were astounded to see a dead fox being buried with all the ceremony and chanting of sutras that usually accompanied the passing of a monk. When they were all agog with excitement and rumours and suggestions, Hyakujō told them the story he had invented.

A certain old man, he said, had been born and reborn in the shape of a fox for thousands of years, because, as the head of this very monastery, he had once misled the congregation by declaring that the enlightened man was above and beyond the Law of Karma. What then should he have answered? Should he have said that the enlightened man is still subject to karma, to the chain of life and death? This was his question to Hyakujō. Hyakujō had answered that the Law of Cause

and Effect cannot be avoided. He instantly became enlightened, his fox-body was no longer necessary, and was to be found near the monastery and buried with suitable rites.

This is the story Hyakujō told, but it contains, as was intended, a glaring contradiction. If it is wrong to say that the enlightened man becomes free of karma, he will be of necessity reborn into some sphere of life or other. But the old man was reborn as a fox for saying that the enlightened man does become free of karma. Here we have a logical fallacy, a vicious circle, a perpetual check (in chess), and it is this which Ōbaku pointed to. Again, if, when told the right answer by Hyakujō, the old man became free of the law of cause and effect, was not this just what he himself had said, five-hundred fox-lives before, namely, that the enlightened man becomes free of cause and effect? The brain reels at this whirl of intellection.

Hyakujō was afraid Ōbaku had got into this whirlpool of a dilemma. He called Ōbaku to him and was no doubt going to give him a sound box of the ears to help him cut the Gordian knot; but got a good clout over the head himself. Overjoyed, he cried, "You understand what it took Daruma nine years of wall-gazing to understand!"

## THE COMMENTARY

不落因果，爲甚麼墮野狐。不昧因果，爲甚麼脫野狐。若向者裏著得一隻眼，便知得前百丈，贏得風流五百生。

"Not falling into the Law of Cause and Effect"—for what reason falling into a fox-life? "Not setting aside the Law of Cause and Effect"—for what reason being released from a fox-life? If in regard to this you have the one (Buddha-) eye, then you understand the former Hyakujō's

(= the old man's) dramatic five hundred reincarnations that he received.

It is worthy of note that this criticism, like all the other criticisms, is not an explanation of the Case. In the same way, when a *rōshi*<sup>19</sup> gives a sermon on one of the Cases in the *Mumonkan* or *Hekiganroku*, he does not explain or define, but seems to be speaking off the point, or as Mumon does here, asks questions without answering them. He asks the questions, not because he does not know the answer, not because he expects an answer, (any answer would be the wrong one,) but because, as explained before, a statement is limited, a question unlimited. If you limit yourself within either of the statements "Not falling," or "Not setting aside," (and both are perfectly correct) your's is the fox's skin! Shaku Sōen says that the old man's mistake was not in what he said but in how he said it.<sup>20</sup>

What he said, "He does not fall into Karma," was wrong. "He falls into Karma," is wrong. "He neither falls nor not falls into Karma," is right, but dead. Compare the living answer given by Isan:

時瀉山在會下作典座。司馬頭陀，舉野狐話問，典座作麼生。座  
撼門扇三下。司馬曰，大癡生。座曰，佛法是非這箇道理。  
(五燈會元，三)

At one time Isan was cook. Shiba the *zuda*<sup>21</sup> brought up this matter of the fox and asked his opinion of it. Isan moved the door three times. Shiba said, "That is very rough!" Isan replied, "Buddhistic truth is not to be found in the discussion of abstract principles."

## THE VERSE

不落不昧，兩采一賽。不昧不落，千錯萬錯。

19. A teacher of Zen to monks of the Zen Sect.

20. In *The Iron Hute*.

21. Monk leading a life of austerities.

Not falling, not darkening;—two faces, but one die.

Not darkening, not falling,—wrong! All wrong!

Though the two statements are almost opposite in meaning, their inner meaning, their living meaning which is one with the Fact itself, is the same, just as with the different sides of a die, in which the readings are from 1 to 6, the die itself is one. However, if you think this has explained everything, "all is wrong," all is mistaken. Or to take this "all is wrong" in a deeper sense, all things are wrong, are mistaken, since they are like "a woman's reason," they admit of no reduction to, subservience to some general law of progress or evolution or ultimate Good, but are simply as they are in virtue of their own nature which is the Nature of all things.

To say, therefore, that all is Divine, or all is material, or spiritual, or meaningful or meaningless—the words do not matter. Only it is safer to say, like Shakespeare, that "readiness is all," or like Mumon, that "all is wrong," since when, as we must, we deny all attributes to God, it is above all important to deny the attribute of not making mistakes.

Besides that given in the translation, there is another explanation of 兩采一賽, namely that according to the Chinese proverb, that "two casts of a die, do not count if they are the same," there is no gain and no loss, the result is indifferent, "not falling into Karma" is the same as "not setting aside Karma." To illustrate this "loving indifference of the creator," Katō quotes from the *Shōdōka*:

了知生死不相關，  
行亦禪坐亦禪，語默動靜體安然。  
縱遭鋒刃常坦坦，假饒毒藥也閒閒。

I have realised that life and death have no relation to me:

Walking is Zen, sitting is Zen;  
 In speech and silence, movement and repose, the  
 Ground of Being is (always) at rest.  
 Spears and swords dart out at us, but it is undisturbed;  
 By poisons also, it is unaffected.

The term translated here "Ground of Being," 體, or 體大, means "body," but is formless; it means the substance, the essential, the greatness of quintessence, the fundamental immutable substance of all things, the Universal Substance, 體法. This is the use in the 2nd Chapter of the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*.

所言義者，則有三種。云何爲三。一者體大。謂一切法眞如平等，不增不減故。

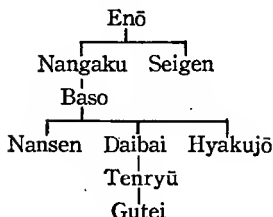
There are three aspects of the meaning (of Thusness) and if you ask what they are, I answer, first, the greatness of quintessence, that is to say, all things, all existences are of Thusness, the same in their nature, neither increasing nor decreasing.

The above quotation from Yōka Daishi shows the attitude we are to adopt to the whole question of karma. The fact is, that we are bound by karma as an ordinary man is bound by a rock, or by a motor-car that won't go. The sculptor is master of the rock, the mechanic is master of the machine, in so far as they are willingly in accord with the laws of the material in which they work. And inasmuch as this obedience to law is conscious, we may say that the spiritual state of the illuminated man is that of karma becoming as it were conscious, with the psychological result that not a particle of freedom, not a particle of constraint, remains. If we can reach the "Greatness of Quintessence," the ground of our being, which is co-terminous with the ground of all being, the problem of karma is solved,—but not by transcending it. This is where Zen differs from Christian Mysticism, but agrees with Christ's "That the Glory of God may be manifested." And in fact, the problem, insoluble intellectually is solved

every day, by life itself. If we say we are above karma, we are wrong (at the moment of assertion); if we say we are subject to karma, we are robots and deny our deepest experiences. If we assert that we are both above karma and subject to it, we are lying. And all our assertions are merely the leaves and branches of knowledge; they are not the Root.

### Case III

#### GUTEI'S FINGER



#### *Dramatis Personae*

The name of Gutei was originally a nickname given to him on account of his fondness for reciting a part of the Saptakoti-buddhamatr Dharani<sup>1</sup>, 七俱胝佛母心陀羅尼經, Gutei being the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese transliteration of *koti*. The dates of Gutei's birth and death are not recorded, but since he was the spiritual son of Tenryū, descended through Daibai from Baso (Cases XXX, XXXIII) who died in 788, it is clear that Gutei was a contemporary of Ōbaku (of the previous Case) and Rinzai (died 867). Inoue shows that the incident of the present case took place between 845 when more than 260,000 monks and nuns were returned to secular life, and 847, when a Buddhist revival took place.

Of Tenryū also very little is known. One of his mondō is interesting.

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1. A Dharani is a mantra, incantation, spell, a mystical or magical formula employed in yoga. It is said that every word and deed of a Bodhisattva should be a dharani. In Zen services they are also used, for historical reasons, and as a means of composing the mind before and after the service. See D. T. Suzuki's *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, pp. 12-23.







### CASE III

Gutei Teaching

He is pointing with his finger.

A monk said, "How shall we get out of the Three Worlds?" Tenryū answered, "You, at this moment—where are you?"

## THE CASE

俱胝和尚，凡有詰問，唯舉一指。後有一童子，因外人問，和尚說何法要。童子亦豎指頭。胝聞遂以刀斷其指。童子負痛號哭而去。胝復召之。童子迴首，胝却豎起指。童子忽然領悟。胝將順世，謂衆曰，吾得天龍一指頭禪，一生受用不盡。言訖示滅。

Whatever he was asked (concerning Zen) Gutei simply stuck up one finger. At one time he had an acolyte, whom a visitor asked, "What is the essential point of your master's teaching?" The boy just stuck up one finger. Hearing of this, Gutei cut off his finger with a knife. As the boy ran out of the room screaming with pain, Gutei called to him. When he turned round his head, Gutei stuck up one finger. The boy suddenly became enlightened.

When Gutei was about to die, he said to the assembled monks, "I received this one-finger-Zen from Tenryū. I used it all my life, but did not exhaust it." When he had finished saying this, he entered into his eternal rest.

There are several versions of this story and in this one the middle part is much abbreviated. The best form of the anecdote is that in which Gutei's interview with the boy is thus described:

師一日潛袖刀子，問童子，聞你會佛法，是否。童子曰，是。師

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2. Trailokya, the three worlds of desire, form and formlessness.

曰，如何是佛。童豎起指頭。師以刀斷其指。童叫喚走出。師召童子，童回首。師曰，如何是佛。童舉手，不見指頭。豁然大悟。

One day, Gutei having hid a knife in his sleeve said to the boy, "I hear that you understand what Buddhism really is: is that so?" The boy replied, "It is so." Gutei said, "What is the Buddha?" The boy stuck up his finger. Gutei cut it off with the knife. As the boy ran howling out, Gutei called to him. He turned his head round, and Gutei said, "What is the Buddha?" The boy lifting up his hand (to stick out his finger) saw no finger there and became suddenly enlightened.

What is called "a boy" here means one who has entered the monastery to recite the sutras and so on, but who has not yet received the tonsure, 落髮, perhaps between 12-16 years of age. Most commentators make him a mere imitator of his master and hold him up to scorn as being like monks who pretend to have a knowledge of Zen when they have no understanding of it whatever. This spoils the story, though it does not alter the *kōan* as such. It is quite clear that the boy had already a considerable understanding of his master's one-finger-Zen, for when he again asked, "What is the Buddha?" he instantly tried to raise his finger again. You may say, "This was the force of *habit*, to which we may reply, "It was the force of *habit*."

The origin of language is said to be sign language, to which Gutei's action-answer belongs. This is no doubt what is called in Zen, "returning to the root." All that we do, the way we walk, the way we eat, the tremor of an eyelid, reveals that root. Actions speak louder than words. Chuangtse developed the thought of the infinite meaning of the insignificant, into cosmological grandeur. Emerson says:

There is no great or small  
But the soul that maketh all.

How can a finger, and perhaps a not very clean one

at that, utter knowledge? How can the lilies of the field or the fowls of the air manifest the essential Nature of All Things?

There is a very difficult and variously explained passage in Chuangtse, which has a bearing on this matter of a finger. The verbal coincidence may be accidental, but the philosophy developed is, to some extent, an explanation of Gutei's attitude.

Instead of using your own finger to explain in what respect (another's) finger is not a finger, it is better to use a no-finger to explain what is not a finger. To explain what is not a horse, by a horse, is not so good as explaining what is not (really) a horse by a no-horse. All Heaven and Earth is only a finger. All things in the world are only a horse.

That is to say, rather than using a finger or a horse as a fixed notion, a determined name, in order to emphasize the undoubted differences of things, it is better to remember that the real finger is a no-finger, in the sense that it is undifferentiated in Reality from all other things; and that the name, the word, "finger", is a useful, practical everyday expression that has no correspondence with fact. Just as "I and the Father are one," so I and my finger are one, my finger is God's finger. Not that God uses my finger or that my finger is part of the Body of God,—rather, that my finger is God, without remainder. This is what we mean by saying that Gutei realised, when Tenryū held up his finger, that the finger was a no-finger-like God, with no attributes, because all attributes and contradictories are to be predicated of Him and it. Christ pointed to the flowers of the field, and ever since people have explained it as referring to the beauty of the flowers. If Gutei had said, "Heaven and Earth are one finger," he would have been understood, that is, misunderstood. Intellectual understanding is of its nature partial, but carries with it the illusion of totality.

The silent raising of the finger could not be mis-

understood, for it cannot be understood. It can be ignored or wondered at or laughed at, but never explained.

Gutei's dying words are of deep meaning. "It was not finished." What is true is always new.

New every morning is the love  
Our waking and uprising prove.

New every morning is the sun, like Gutei's finger, like the Nembutsu, like Bach's solo violin sonatas.

## THE COMMENTARY

俱胝竝童子悟處，不在指頭上。若向者裏見得，天龍同俱胝竝童子，與自己一串穿却。

The origin of the enlightenment of Gutei and the boy is not in the finger itself. If you understand this, Tenryū, Gutei, the boy, and you yourself are all run through with one skewer.

Mumon's statement here is a very bold one, designed to warn us against exclusive preoccupation with what may well be Reality itself, the finger. But it may be asked, who would make the mistake of supposing that the real meaning of life was contained in the tip of a finger? Yet after all, how many millions of both Buddhists and Christians suppose it to be between the covers of a book! So Christ warns us: "Ye search the scriptures, for in them ye think..." But Christ also says, "Come unto me..." This "me" is Gutei's finger, against which Mumon is warning us. "If you meet a Buddha in the street, kill him!"

Inoue<sup>3</sup> takes the "this", 者裏, as meaning that Zen is the finger; the last sentence would signify that our

misinterpretation will skewer the three of them, together with ourselves, into an indistinguishable mass of incoherence.

## THE VERSE

俱抵鈍置老天龍，利刃單提勘小童。  
巨靈擡手無多子，分破華山千萬重。

Gutei made a fool of old Tenryū (or, Gutei and Tenryū made a fool of everybody).  
The sharp blade has damaged the boy.  
The Mountain-Spirit raised his hand and lo, without effort,  
The thousand, myriad-piled mountain was split into two, Kasan (and Shuyō).

Some commentators take this verse and the preceding commentary as expressing Mumon's adverse criticism of Gutei, and say that just as the boy imitated his master Gutei, so Gutei imitated his master Tenryū. Again, they say that the chopping off the finger was an unnecessary and barbarous act, condemned by Mumon, who contrasts it with the gentle but all-powerful action of the Mountain-Spirit, who, according to Chinese tradition, divided the mountain with a mere touch of the hand, and allowed the waters of the Yellow River to flow between.

The reason for such an interpretation is perhaps the pious cowardice of the commentators, who find it difficult to swallow the mangling of the poor boy's hand. But why not take it as a practical illustration of Christ's "If thine eye offend thee...." It may be said that there is a great deal of difference between cutting off your own finger and cutting somebody else's off. This is so, and Gutei had to be quite sure of himself—much

more so, in fact, than many doctors who cheerfully cut people about on the mere off-chance of its doing them some good.

Nevertheless, when Mumon says that Gutei has made a fool of Tenryū, this may well refer to the former's excessive use of the one-finger-Zen, and it certainly seems that the comparison with the Mountain-Spirit is to the disadvantage of Gutei.

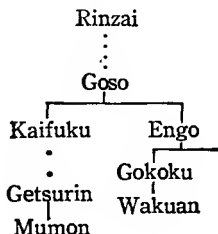
The question is: does not Gutei, in using the finger-raising only, for all comers and under all circumstances, contravene the Zen practice and the Christian principle of "all things to all men," the Confucian dictum that "The superior man is not a vessel"?

The point essential to grasp is that any action may be right in any circumstances, from which it follows that the same action may be right in every circumstance. The "may" means that it all depends upon how that same action is done. Not that the same action is done in a different way every time—this is not the meaning. The same action in the same way—this is all right—but the question is, in what way? In Gutei's way? This is what Mumon is warning us against, the danger of indiscriminate imitation, of any kind of imitation.



## Case IV

### WAKUAN'S "WHY NO BEARD?"



#### *Dramatis Persona*

Wakuan (Huoan) 1108-1179, was the disciple of Gokoku, the disciple of Engo, the disciple of Goso.

When he was dying he wrote his death-poem.

鐵樹開華	雄鷄生卵
七十二年	搖籃斷繩

The iron tree blossoms,  
The cock lays an egg;  
Seventy two years,  
And the cradle-rope snaps.

The other *dramatis persona* is the barbarian, which means in this case not a kind of Caliban, but Daruma, who had now been dead for six centuries, but his pictures and statues were to be found all over China, and he is usually represented with a beard, a symbol of virility.

#### THE CASE

或庵曰，西天胡子，因甚無鬚。

Wakuan said, "Why has the Western Barbarian no beard?"

Some commentators take this to mean, "Why has the beardless foreigner no beard?" This is certainly a difficult question to answer unscientifically, and worthy of a Zen master, but a more natural interpretation is, "Why has the bearded foreigner no beard?" Indians and Persians were usually hairy people compared to the (Southern) Chinese, whose beard often consisted of a few long black hairs.

The problem Wakuan sets us is not a philosophical or in the ordinary sense a religious one. Christ was a man; he was also God. Mary was a virgin, and a mother at the same time. God created the world out of nothing. God is the author of evil, but not responsible for it. He creates imperfection, but is himself perfect. Christ died for mankind, but is far from really dead. All this is no different from a beardless bearded barbarian. The great difference between Zen and Christianity, however, is this, that Zen does not ask us somehow or other to believe in the contradiction. It requires us to become the omnipotent weak Nazarene. We have ourselves to create the universe out of nothing, to have a virgin birth, to be perfectly imperfect, to have a beard and not to have it, all the same time. Donne says, what is Zen, rather than Christian:

Take me to you, imprison me, for I  
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste except you ravish me.

Again a word of Zen:

God is not a God of the dead but of the living, for  
unto him all live.

This must not be explained as referring to physical and spiritual life. We have, like God, to be infinitely finite,

to be born, live and die, and at the same "time", be timeless.

## THE COMMENTARY

參須實參，悟須實悟。者箇胡子，直須親見一回始得。說親見早成兩箇。

If you study Zen, you must really study it. If you become enlightened it must be the real enlightenment. If you once see the barbarian's real face intimately, then you have at last got "it". But when you explain what you saw, you have already fallen into relativity.

Once I stayed for some time at a small Zen temple. I got up at the proper time, 4.30 a.m. and cleaned the temple every day, but the monks were all in bed until seven or eight o'clock. I cursed them as I swept, and despised them as I washed the floor. I hoped the rōshi would get up and catch them slacking and find me heroically working in the darkness, but he never did. He was in bed himself. I judged the monks indifferent to their duty and to the welfare and prosperity of Zen. I thought of nothing else but them and their idleness, and begrudged both my own labour and their slumbers. Some time after, hearing of this from me, the rōshi asked, "For whose sake do you clean the temple?" This question was a puzzler. He himself answered, "For your own sake. When you work, work for yourself, not for other people." This is the meaning of 實參. When you work, just work, don't worry about whether others are working, or whether the temple will be burned down next week or not. When you sleep, just sleep, don't worry about whether your beard is in the bed or outside. When you write a book, don't worry about whether it will ever be published or whether

anyone will ever read it. All that is God's worry. Let him worry about it. This is the meaning of "casting all your care him." Why did Daruma have a beard? Why did he have no beard? Why did he have five and a half beards? Here is the first step towards the answer.

## THE VERSE

癡人面前      不可說夢  
胡子無鬚      惺惺添憎

Before a fool,  
Do not expound your dream.  
The beardless barbarian,—  
It is adding obscurity to clarity!

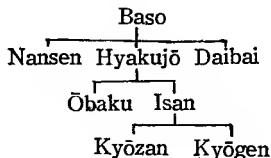
The first two lines seem to have something of the meaning of "Cast not your pearls before swine," one of the least agreeable sayings attributed to Christ. It is certainly a waste of time to express our experiences of truth to others, unless, like Shakespeare or Homer, we have the power to universalise them, that is, somehow show others that they have actually had the same experiences. What we can do, then, is always take the opportunity of drawing other people's attention to their own possession of pearls, that is, their experiences of reality. We ourselves often do, as Emerson says, neglect our own intuitions and have to "receive them with shame from another." In any case, "Quench not the spirit!" is the motto, as Kierkegaard says.

The second two lines of the verse are a sort of short history of the world, or at least of religion. Our ordinary life is a kind of, not mixture, but alloy of absolute and relative. When we begin to distinguish the two we become exceedingly confused. Which are we to believe, "Death before dishonour," or "Safety first"?

Ultimately we come to see that these two, this so-called "alloy", was not composed of two things at all, that they were all the time identical, that the "real" table and the table we eat our dinner on is the same table. The table is square; at the same time it is round. Daruma has a beard; at the same time he has no beard. Every thing is relative; at the same time it is absolute. "God is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for unto Him all live." This is true, but not the whole truth, because unto God the dead are also dead, and the living living. There is not a relative truth, *and* an absolute truth. The relative is the absolute, the absolute is the relative, and yet we must go on and assert that the relative is not only the absolute but the relative; the absolute is not only the relative but the absolute. However we synthesize, and say "Difference is sameness, and sameness is difference," we must continue to analyse, and say that difference is not sameness, and sameness is not difference. And is not all this "adding the obscurity of thought to the clarity and simplicity of daily life?" It is; but thus, and by no other means, do we become human.

## Case V

### KYŌGEN'S MAN-UP-A-TREE



#### *Dramatis Persona*

Kyōgen (Hsiangyen), eleventh in the line of Zen after Daruma, was a disciple of Isan, though he was for some time under Hyakujō. His name was taken from the name of a mountain, and the temple there, where he afterwards lived. He is said to have been seven feet tall, clever, and learned, and this stood in the way of his enlightenment, but Isan recognised his innate capability of grasping the truth, and one day said to him, "I do not ask you concerning the learning and book-knowledge you have accumulated during your life. Before you came out of your mother's womb, before you knew this from that, your real self—speak, tell me what it is!" Kyōgen stood there stupidly, unable to answer. Then, after remaining silent for some time, he began to explain, in many words, his view of the matter, but Isan would not listen. At last Kyōgen said, "I beg you to explain it to me!" Isan replied, "My explanation would express my own realization; what would be the use of it to you?" Kyōgen went back to his room, and searched among his books and lecture-notes for some sentence, some passage to use as an answer, but not one could he find. He was in the state Herbert describes in *Affliction*:

Now I am here, what with thou do with me?  
None of my books will show.

I read, and sigh, and wish I were a tree,  
 For sure then I should grow  
 To fruit or shade: at least some bird would trust  
 Her household to me, and I should be just.

Even if Kyōgen had quoted from, for example, the Svetasvatara Upanishad this would still be third or fourth-hand. It would only have betrayed a taste for what Nietzsche calls, "Der schlechteste aller Geschmäcker, der Geschmäck für das Unbedingte." Sighing to himself (in Chinese) Kyōgen said, "You can't fill an empty stomach with a picture of food," and burned up all books and note-books, and decided, "In this life, it will be impossible for me to come to a knowledge of the truth. I will spend the rest of my days as a rice-gruel monk, and avoid troubling my peace of mind." With tears, he left Isan and went to Nanyang, where he settled down. One day, as he was clearing the undergrowth, and sweeping, a stone struck a bamboo. Bursting into a loud shout of joy at the sound, he suddenly became enlightened. Returning to his hut, he performed ablutions and offered incense, and prostrating himself in the direction of Isan, said, "Thanks to the deep kindness of the Master, I have returned to my parents. If, at that time, he had explained things to me, this would never have happened!" Kyōgen's poem upon his illumination was as follows.

The sound of something struck!—and I have forgotten  
 all I knew.<sup>1</sup>

Training was not even temporarily necessary.<sup>2</sup>  
 In movement and deportment I manifest the Ancient  
 Way.<sup>3</sup>

And fall not into a possible pessimism.<sup>4</sup>  
 Nothing of me remains behind when I pass,<sup>5</sup>

---

1. Satori is suddenly induced, and consists in unlearning.

2. Effect is out of proportion with cause.

3. Satori has no supernatural gift of tongues or prophecy.

4. Satori is not passivistic, it has nothing to do with "a state of absolute calmness."

5. No "looking before and after."

In speech and manner free of dignity.<sup>6</sup>  
 All those who have reached this state of knowledge-  
 by-experience,  
 Without exception tell of this supreme activity-  
 potential.<sup>7</sup>

After this, Kyōgen left his hermitage and went back to Isan, showed him his verse, and received his confirmation. However, Kyōzan, Isan's disciple, raised some objection, and Kyōgen hereupon composed another verse:

My last year's poverty was not real poverty;  
 This year's is the real thing.  
 Last year a fine gimlet could find a place;  
 This year even the gimlet is gone.

Kyōzan said of this poem, "I grant that you have Nyorai Zen, but of Patriarchal Zen you have not yet dreamed."<sup>8</sup>  
 Kyōgen made yet another stanza:

I have a single activity-potential;<sup>9</sup>  
 In the twinkling of an eye it can be seen.  
 If you still don't understand,  
 Call the alcolyte and ask him!

Kyōzan confirmed his understanding of "Patriarchal Zen." Kyōgen lived for long in poverty at Kyōgenji Temple, receiving many disciples.

## THE CASE

香巖和尚云，如人上樹，口啣樹枝，手不攀枝，腳不踏樹。樹下有人，問西來意。不對即違他所問。若對又喪身失命。正恁麼時，作麼生對。

6. Zen "impudence."

7. No oddness or eccentricity; a monotonous sameness.

8. Nyorai Zen implies Buddhistic, pre-Daruma Zen. Patriarchal Zen is that handed down from master to master after Daruma. Quite properly, Kyōgen's answer asserts and exhibits his independence of such a distinction.

9. 機, *ki*, is very difficult to translate, and even to understand.



Kyōgen said, "It's like a man (a monk) up a tree, hanging from a branch with his mouth; his hands can't grasp a bough, his feet won't reach one. Under the tree there is another man, who asks him the meaning of Daruma's coming from the West. If he doesn't answer, he evades his duty. If he answers, he will lose his life. What should he do?"

This problem is a central one in human life, particularly between teacher and pupil, husband and wife, and so on. If we teach, they don't understand. If we don't teach, they are dissatisfied. Love is mutual obedience. Also it means teaching the other to love more. If I am always obedient, the other becomes impudent or at least makes no progress. If I demand obedience, love being mutual, the other's love simply decreases. Kierkegaard says that we must believe in the love in the other's heart and thus arouse it. Perhaps this is the answer to Kyōgen's problem, but we must not expect any results. Simply believe, believe that if we open our mouths we won't fall, believe that if we don't open our mouths the other will somehow understand by that the meaning of the coming of Daruma from the West.

It is said that a monk Shō, 招上座, said to Kyōgen, "I don't ask you about when he was up the tree, but about before he got up it!" At this Kyōgen gave a great laugh, 呵呵大笑. His laughter must have been an echo of the laugh he gave when the stone struck the bamboo.

## THE COMMENTARY

縦有懸河之辯，惣用不著。說得一大藏教，亦用不著。若向者裏對得著，活却從前死路頭，死却從前活路頭。其或未然，直待當來問彌勒。

Though your eloquence flows like a river, it is all of no avail. Even if you can explain the whole body of the Buddhist sutras, that also is useless. If you can answer the problem properly, you can kill the living, bring the dead to life. But if you can't answer, you must ask Maitreya when he comes.

"Though I should speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity..." what is charity? Is it perhaps the answer to Kyōgen's question? If we really love somebody or some animal or plant, that is enough. Lovingly shutting the mouth or lovingly opening it, lovingly living, lovingly dying,—that is Zen.

The whole corpus of the Buddhist scripture was first made in China in A.D. 581. Buddha would have read his sutras with surprise, and perhaps not have understood many of them, especially perhaps the Platform Sutra, written by a Chinese. In any case it is important not to despise words. Actions, it is said, speak louder, but not less truly, not more untruly.

In the last sentence of the Commentary, Mumon is threatening the reader with the results of a lack of seriousness in grasping the meaning of the problem. Maitreya is the next Buddha, now in the Tusita Heaven. He is to come 5,000 years (others say 5,670,000,000 years) after the Nirvana of Sakyamuni. According to tradition he was born of a Brahmin family in Southern India. The statues of Maitreya are naturally imaginative and fanciful.

## THE VERSE

香嚴真杜撰	惡毒無盡限
啞却衲僧口	通身迸鬼眼

Kyōgen really has bad taste,

And spreads poison limitlessly.  
He stops up the monks' mouths,  
And frantically they squeeze tears out from  
their dead eyes.

"Has bad taste" is *zuzan*, which refers to a man named Zu who "chose" poems wanting in rhyme and rhythm. The "poison" is the unnecessary and unprofitable problem raised by Kyōgen. The moral of the story is, don't get into awkward circumstances. "Dead eyes" is devil's eyes.

Mumon is praising Kyōgen in reverse, or rather he is showing us that as far as profit and loss are concerned, there is never one without the other. This is Emerson's compensation. And indeed he may pose another problem. Suppose a man practises asceticism for ten years, and the day before he is going to be enlightened,—he dies! Was it worth it all? Would it not have been better to read poetry, listen to Bach, enjoy the four seasons, "Flowers in the summer, fires in the fall." The orthodox will say that he will get enlightenment very soon and easily in the next life, but there's no end to nonsense. Anyway Mumon is talking like the schoolboy who regrets that such people as Euclid and Shakespeare were ever born. Another way of thinking of Mumon's aspersions on Kyōgen is, "Damn braces, bless relaxes." When words are the flower of action, continuous with it, all is well, but afterwards, when we repeat them, they hide more truth than they reveal, and to meaningfulise them we are forced to say the opposite of what was said before, to curse where we blessed, to make alive what we destroyed. So when Donne's thought became bogged in "chastity" it escaped into freedom through "rape"; when "freedom" became meaningless, it realised itself in "imprisonment."

## Case VI

### THE BUDDHA'S FLOWER

#### *Dramatis Personae*

The word Buddha comes from budh, to be completely aware, and was translated into Chinese by 覺, to perceive, be awake, and 智, gnosis. The original meaning of 佛 is to flourish. It was used for its sound. Buddha is transliterated 佛陀, 浮圖, 浮陀, 浮頭, 浮塔, 勃陀, 勃駄, 沒駄, 母駄, 母陀, 部陀, 休屠, etc.

The historical Sakyamuni, who is referred to in this Case, was born some time or other, no doubt, and died at the age of eighty. The records of the life of the Buddha are utterly unlike those of Christ. The Indian and the Jewish minds are those of two different species of animals, and the Chinese mind resembles neither. But more important than these differences is the question whether we are to consider the Buddha as a historic figure, a living person, a teacher, a man with human experiences; or to think of the teachings, quite apart from whether Buddha even existed.

There is the same problem in Christianity: is it primitive Christianity we want, the actual words, the thoughts and feelings of Jesus, or Christianity as it has changed and developed in twenty centuries? This is a dilemma not easily resolved, for on the one hand we want the highest teachings, but on the other, it is the humanity we are after, the human warmth. Whether the story of Buddha holding up a flower is authentic, or whether the story of the woman taken in adultery is spurious or not does not really matter. Mrs. Gamp and Mr. Pecksniff are as real to us as Queen Elizabeth and Dr. Johnson. It is this kind of reality that matters. From this point of view the miracles of the Gospels

and the Life of Buddha are not rejected, are not accepted. Whether Lazarus rose from the dead or Buddha was wafted through the air to Ceylon are poetical, not historical questions. We neglect the improbable miraculous for the same reason as we reject the certain fact,—it is meaningless. But for Zen the important thing is not the life and death of Sakyamuni, nor his teachings, but his enlightenment. Not his words but his silence, not his acts but his un-acts are what we would grasp. What did Buddha become aware of under the Bodhi-tree? No sutra tells us. No book on Buddhism informs us.

Mahakasyapa was one of the Ten Great Disciples of Buddha, 十大弟子. Each was supposed to have a special talent:

Sariputra, 舍利弗, wisdom, 智慧;  
 Maudgalyayana, 目犍連, supernatural power, 神通;  
 Mahakasyapa, 大迦葉, discipline, 頭陀;  
 Aniruddha, 阿那律, Deva vision, 天眼;  
 Subhuti, 須菩提, explaining the Void, 解空;  
 Purna, 富樓那, expounding the Law, 說法;  
 Katyayana, 迦旃延, fundamental principles, 論義;  
 Upali, 優波離, maintaining the rules, 持律;  
 Rahula, 羅睺羅 (son of Sakyamuni), the esoteric, 密行;  
 Ananda, 阿難陀, hearing and remembering, 多聞.

This is of course only legendary, but interesting to compare to the twelve disciples of Christ, who seem to have had no talent except for running away, and not understanding what was said to them.

Mahakasyapa was a Brahman of Magadha. During Buddha's life he was one of the chief disciples, and after his death convoked and directed the First Synod. (There is no connection between him and Kasyapa Buddha, the 6th of the Seven Ancient Buddhas, or with Kasyapa Matanga, who with Gobharana brought images and scriptures to Loyang in A.D. 67.) Mahakasyapa was fa-

mous as following most assiduously the twelve Dhuta, a discipline to attain Nirvana.

## THE CASE

世尊昔在靈山會上，拈花示衆。是時衆皆默然。惟迦葉尊者，破顏微笑。世尊云，吾有正法眼藏，涅槃妙心，實相無相，微妙法門。不立文字，教外別傳，付囑摩訶迦葉。

Once when the World-Honoured One, in ancient times, was upon Mount Grdhrakuta, he held up a flower before the congregation of monks. At this time all were silent, but the Venerable Kasyapa only smiled. The World-Honoured One said, "I have the Eye of the True Law, the Secret Essence of Nirvana, the Formless Form, the Mysterious Law-Gate. Without relying upon words and letters, beyond all teaching as a special transmission, I pass this all on to Mahakasyapa."

The story of Buddha lifting up a flower is not found in any extant sutra. The earliest history of Zen, *Keitoku Dentō Roku*, 1004 A.D. does not record the incident. It is said to be in the *Daibontennōmonbutsuketsugikyō*, 大梵天王問佛決疑經, and this sutra is one of the so-called false sutras, 偽經, forged in the third or fourth century. There it says;

At this time, the World-honoured One lifted up a consecrated golden-coloured Bala flower, opening his eyes, and, raising his eyebrows expressively, showed it to the assembled congregation. At this time all were silent and motionless; only the Venerable Kasyapa smiled.

The monks were all silent. So were Buddha and Kasyapa, but with a difference. We might call this a

love scene, just as the story of the Forty Seven Rōnin is a love story. Browne says in *Love's Labours Lost*:

Love's feeling is more soft and sensible  
Than are the tender hornes of Cockled Snayles.

In love, anything will do, raising a flower, or not raising it, words or silence, but the part is greater than the whole, and the less the part the greater the whole. The True Law Eye, 正法眼藏. 正 means true as opposed to false 邪, but in this case it means absolute, beyond true and false and all other antitheses. 法 means things, the Buddhist Law. Here it means perhaps all existence. 眼 means clear apprehension without any added intellectual deformation or emotional discoloration. 藏 means that all is included, nothing omitted or wasted, "not a worm is cloven in vain. Altogether, 正法眼藏, means "all including eye of the absolute truth."

Nirvana is understood in many ways, as individual annihilation, the end of reincarnation, a state of bliss, an individual returning to the All-Fire, a transcending of life and death. This last is the Mahayana and the Zen meaning, and its mysteriousness and ununderstandability is expressed by 妙心.

實相無相 means literally "real form no form," the real form of a thing is a no-form. This seems to me a mistake in Zen philosophy, coming from its often excessive transcendentalism. The real form is not only a no-form, it is a form as well, at one and the same time. Zen comes ultimately from the Upanishads. The Svetasvatara Upanishad speaks of "the Self, the one God, shadowing all creatures, the witness, the perceiver, —the only one free from qualities." But the Self must also be free from being free from qualities.

"The wonderful gate of the law," 微妙法門. means the mysterious but every-day power by which with words or with no words we arouse the deepest spiritual-material truths in our common minds, as Buddha did between himself and Kasyapa. This has more or less

the same meaning as, "A special transmission outside the scriptures," 教外別傳. As for "No dependence upon words and letters," 不立文字, the existence of the *Mumonkan* itself shows that this statement really means that all words are misleading except Zen words; but so are all actions. Buddha's holding up the flower—has this the meaning of Christ's "Consider the lilies of the field"? We are told to consider how they grow, without intellectuality, without emotion, without hope or satiety. The result is a beauty, a significance greater than the most successful human life. Was Buddha's flower Tennyson's "in the crannied wall" that revealed to Mahakasyapa "what God and man is"? Eckhart says,

The meanest thing that one knows in God,—for instance, if one could understand a flower as it has its being in God; this would be a higher thing than the whole world!

Then there is the *Immortality Ode*:

To me the meanest flower that blows  
Can give thoughts that lie too deep for tears.

The trouble is, and what Zen wishes us to avoid, the dividing of the flower and its meaning, the flower and "the thoughts that wander through eternity." When "the bright consummate flower" is really seen, the flower sees itself. The self flowers.

## THE COMMENTARY

黃面瞿曇，傍若無人。壓良爲賤，懸羊頭賣狗肉。將謂多少奇特。只如當時大衆都笑，正法眼藏，作麼生傳。設使迦葉不笑，正法眼藏，又作麼生傳。若道正法眼藏有傳授，黃面老子，誑謬閭閻。若道無傳授，爲甚麼獨許迦葉。

Golden-faced Kudon impudently forced the good people into depravity. Advertising sheep's



heads, he sells dog-flesh,—but with some genius. However, supposing that at that time all the monks had laughed, how would the “all-including eye of the absolute truth” have been handed on? Or if Kasyapa had not smiled, how would it have been handed on? If you say, it can (anyway) be handed on, that’s the Golden-faced Old Huckster with his loud voiced swindling at the town-gate. If you say it can’t, why did Buddha say he had handed it on to Kasyapa?

“Golden-faced” has many explanations. Sakyamuni was born in Kapilavastu; kapila means brown. The people of his tribe were called “yellow-faced” because of the colour of their skins. The statues of Buddha were of gold, or covered with gold-foil. Kudon is a transliteration of Gautama, one of Buddha’s names before his enlightenment.

“Advertising sheep’s heads” and so on may be taken as praising of Buddha with faint damns, but Mumon’s constant object is to prevent us from forming any dogmatic principle, from coming to any conclusion, from being able to say “I understand!” Again, in the last part, he uses logic to put us in a quandary as to whether and when and how the “truth” is transmitted from one person to another. Even Mumon himself does not ask or answer the question, “What if the line of transmission had been broken?” But we must answer it, and not fall into either nihilism or superstition.

## THE VERSE

拈起花來	尾巴已露
迦葉破顏	人天罔措

Holding up a flower,

The snake shows his tail.

Kasyapa smiles,

The monks don't know what to do.

The snake shows his tail only; the Buddha holds up only a single flower, but the Ophidia and Flora are grasped. The part is greater than the whole. When Buddha holds up a flower some monks should dance round it, some make a sketch of it, some grind it underfoot, some spit on it,—all according to their free-moving life. It would be a great mistake to think that Kasyapa smiled as a sign that he understood something or other. His “breaking his face” was the opening of the flower. We must weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice.

## Case VII

### JŌSHŪ'S WASHING THE BOWL

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Jōshū has already appeared in Case I.

#### THE CASE

趙州因僧問，某甲乍入叢林，乞師指示。州云，喫粥了也未。僧云，喫粥了也。州云，洗鉢盂去。其僧有省。

A monk said to Jōshū, "I have just entered this monastery. I beg you to teach me." Jōshū asked, "Have you eaten your rice-gruel." "I have," replied the monk. "Then", said Jōshū, "go and wash your bowl(s)." The monk was enlightened.

Monastery, 叢林, means literally a copse-wood, that is, a place thickly populated with monks. It is also called zenrin 禪林, and may well have the same connection with trees as school, 學校, which means meeting, 交, under the trees, 木, for learning, 學.

The bowl is one of the Eighteen Things, 十八物, which a monk should carry. There are various lists; one is: willow twigs<sup>1</sup>, soap, three garments, a water bottle, a begging-bowl, a mat, a staff, a censer, a filter, a handkerchief, a knife, a fire-producer, pincers, a hammock, sutras, the monastic rules, a Buddhist image, a Bodhi-sattva image. (One wonders what Thoreau would have said to these.) The staff and the bowl were the most important. Nowadays, in Japan, each Zen monk has a

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1. For cleaning the teeth.

"nest" of bowls, usually four, which fit into each other. The largest, larger than that used by ordinary people, is for rice or rice-gruel; the next for vegetables; the other two for pickles, etc.

This Case looks easy, but cannot be (intellectually) solved. Zen means doing ordinary things willingly and cheerfully. Zen is common life and uncommon life, sense and transcendence, both as one, yet two. When the monk heard what Jōshū said, he saw his rice bowl as "that upturned bowl we call the sky." But we need to insert some humour in it, and when Jōshū said, "Wash your bowl, that's all!" he meant, "Wash your bowl, that's All." Or, he meant,

Washing is truth, truth washing; that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

The great danger is to divide the washing and the truth.

Sweeping a room as for thy laws  
Makes that and the action fine.

This is true. The room is well-swept; the sweeping is well done, but the "as" is too separative to allow us to call these lines of Herbert an expression of Zen. Wash away your dirty enlightenment; sweep away the divinity, and even the fineness.

## THE COMMENTARY

趙州開口見膽，露出心肝。者僧聽事不真，喚鐘作甕。

Jōshū opened his mouth and showed his gall-bladder, his heart, and his liver. If the monk didn't really grasp the truth, he mistook the bell for a pot.

There are actually three mistakes we can make. We can look at things in the commonsense way, or the transcendental, or the symbolical. With the present anecdote, the danger is in the first and the third. Zen is not simply doing everything with all one's heart and soul. "Your ordinary mind,—that is the Way." This is true, but not when understood in a pedestrian manner. A bowl must be washed religiously, but with no feeling of the holiness of the action. The washing of the bowl does not "mean" the washing away of the idea of enlightenment. If Jōshū had asked the monk if he had washed his bowl, and said, "Then put some rice in it!" there is no difference. The 6th Patriarch Enō was especially insistent on this, in reference to Jinshū's saying that we must keep the mirror of our hearts bright and clean, and allow no dust to fall on it. It is true, in a way, that we must not desire anything, especially desire enlightenment, but Enō says that the "must not" is wrong. You must not say "must not." Jōshū is pointing to this contradictory realm in which there is no commonsense, no transcendence, no symbolism. *Pilgrim's Progress* tells us of the man with a muck-rake, a golden crown hanging unseen over his head. This is the human situation, but at the same time we have a golden-crown-rake, with muck hanging unseen over our heads.

## THE VERSE

只爲分明極	翻令所得遲
早知燈是火	飯熟已多時

He has made it all so clear,  
 It takes a long time to catch the point.  
 If you realise that it's foolish to look for fire  
 with a fire,  
 The meal won't take so long to cook.

To say, "Then wash your bowl!" is indeed too simple, yet the more we explain, the worse it gets. The short cut, or the long way round,—both have their disadvantages. We are always complicated about simple things, like Hamlet, or simple about complicated things, like Othello.

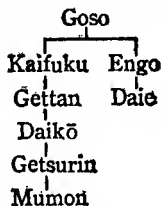
The second two lines have the same meaning as the drowning man begging for water, and the rich man's son dying of poverty in *Hakuin Zenji's Wasan*. If the bird began to look for the air, or the fish for the water,—but are these similes any use? What is difficult to grasp is that the bird is the air, and the fish is the water, and at the same time they are utterly different from each other. The whole problem lies in "at the same time."

## Case VIII

### KEICHŪ'S WHEEL

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Gettan (Yuehan) was Mumon's great grandfather in the faith, but nothing seems to be known about him.



Keichū (Chichung), we are told in the *Sankaikyō*, 山海經, was the inventor of the cart. In 古史考, it says that the Yellow Emperor invented the cart (wheel) and carried heavy things long distances on it; later, a bull was used to pull it, and then Keichū used a horse.

#### THE CASE

月庵和尚問僧，奚仲造車一百輻，拈却兩頭去却軸，明甚麼邊事。

Gettan said to a monk, "Keichū made a hundred carts. If we took off the wheels and removed the axle, what would then be obvious?"

This 一百輻, can be taken to mean a hundred spokes, fifty to each wheel, but it seems better to interpret 輻 as a numeration for carriages, or to translate, "made a hundred trials of putting together the parts of a carriage." This problem is a simplification of the anecdote

recorded in the *Gotōegen* 五燈會元. In this we are told that Gettan one day ascended the pulpit, and after saying the words of the Case above, drew a circle in the air with his staff, cried, "Don't mistake the marked scale on the balance [for the weight itself!]" held his staff out, and went off to his room. The circle represents things subsisting in the arms of the void.

In Laotse, Section 11, we have the following:

Thirty spokes go to the hub of a wheel. But the use of it depends upon the empty space there. Clay is kneaded to make a pot. But the empty space inside is what makes the pot useful. Doors and windows are opened into a room. But it is empty space which gives the room its use. Thus the usefulness of the existence of things derives from Non-existence.

Waley translates this last sentence: "Therefore just as we take advantage of what is, we should recognise the utility of what is not," which is literal and good, but does not quite get the philosophical point of the examples.

The 39th Section of Laotse begins 昔之得一者, which means, "At the Beginning [all things] had the One." What is this "One"? It is the Buddha nature 佛性; the Void, 空; Non-ness, 無; Thusness, 如; the Way, 道. Towards the end of the section it says: 故, 致數與無與 which Legge translates: "So it is that in the enumeration of the different parts of a carriage we do not come on what makes it answer the ends of a carriage." Waley translates it: Enumerate the parts of a carriage, and you still have not explained what a carriage is." We may also express it: "Thus it is said, you count [the parts of] a carriage, but none of them is the carriage itself."

In the *Milindapanha*. Nagasena asks King Menander, who lived in the first century B.C., "In regard to what is a carriage called so? Is it on account of the axle?" "No", replies the King. Nagasena goes on asking the



king, with interminable Indian detail, concerning all the parts of the carriage, receiving the same answer every time. By this means the king is brought to realise his ignorance of what the real carriage is, and is silent. Nagasena then proceeds with the same argument in regard to man, with even greater prolixity.

In the *Greater Nirvana Sutra* we are told, "No water, no river. Human beings are the same. No five skandhas, no men." In the *Daichidoron*, 大智度論, by Nagarjuna, (of the second century A.D., who founded the Madhyamika School with a reality beyond positive and negative,) it says: "For example, a carriage becomes a carriage when the spokes, rim, shaft, and hub are put together. If it is taken apart and separated, it loses the name of carriage. Put the five skandhas together, and as a result you get a man."

Chuangtse says, in Chapter 25, about three quarters of the way through, "By assembling differences we get sameness, by differentiating sameness we get differences. However you examine all the different parts of a horse, you have no idea what a horse is. But if a horse is tied up in front of you and you look at the hundred parts [as one whole] you know what is called a horse."

All this is Buddhistic, it is Taoistic,—but where is the Zen? There is a famous verse by Nagarjuna:

因緣所生法，我說即是空，亦爲是假名，亦是中道義。

All causally produced phenomena, I say, are unreal,  
Are but a passing name, and indicate the Mean.

This is the orthodox translation, "the Mean" implying an Absolute above the absolute and relative. But 空, translated "unreal," in a nihilistic sense, may be translated "real." The essence of Zen is contained in the sentence from the *Hannya Shingyō*: *Shiki soku ze kū, kū soku ze shiki*, which means that phenomena are real, reality is phenomenal. Primitive Buddhism taught that all combinations of things are impermanent, and therefore unreal. This was the Indian experience, and

Laotse and Chuangtse perceived the same thing. But there was also the Chinese experience of the reality of each combination, repeated again and again over the centuries. According to the pre-Buddhist Hinduistic experiences recorded in the Upanishads there was Something behind all phenomena, behind all this nothing which never changes, but is nevertheless alive and creative. And one's self is that Self, identical with it. The Chinese also had this experience. They called it Zen, but would not express it intellectually, that is, partly, but only livingly, that is, wholly. Gettan has taken a step backwards, so that Mumon can take two steps forward.

To put the Case in the form of an imperative instead of an interrogative, "You must [also] be able to ride in a carriage after it is all pulled to pieces, or before it is put together!"

## THE COMMENTARY

若也直下明得。眼似流星，機如掣電。

To clarify this, one's eyes will be like a shooting star, his response like a flash of lightning.

Gettan has given us a supposititious case, and also reduced us to a condition of negativistic, shadowy vacancy. At this moment we have to create the world anew, "with unpremeditated art," and with Blake, together with all the sons of God, shout with joy.

## THE VERSE

機輪轉處	達者猶迷
四維上下	南北東西

Where the wheel of the mind-activity turns  
Even a master doesn't know what to do about it.

It moves in all directions in heaven and earth,  
And south and north and east and west.

The activity of the mind is everywhere, because nowhere. The soul is placeless as well as timeless, in place and in time. The mediaeval concentric spheres moved in three dimensions, counter clockwise, but Gettan's rimless, spokeless, hubless wheel moves in every direction at once. Emerson says, "Things are in the saddle, and rule mankind," but when we are in the saddle, everything is as it is, as it is going to be, as it ought to be,—all by our own will and wisdom. This is the meaning of *Leaves of Grass*.

## Case IX

### DAITSŪ CHISHŌ

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Of Seijō (Chingjang), nothing more is known than is contained in the present Case, and that his lineage was as follows:

Hyakujō  
|  
Isan  
|  
Kyōzan  
|  
Nantō  
|  
Bashō  
|  
Kōyō (Seijō)

Kyōzan was born in 814, the year of Hyakujō's death, so we can make some guess as to when Seijō lived.

#### THE CASE

與陽讓和尚因僧問，大通智勝佛，十劫坐道場，佛法不現前，不得成佛道時如何，讓曰，其問甚諦當。僧云，既是坐道場，爲甚麼不得成佛道。讓曰，爲伊不成佛。

A monk asked [Sei]jō of Kōyō and said, "Daitsū Chishō Buddha did zazen for ten kalpas in a Meditation Hall, and could neither manifest the truth, nor enter the Buddha-Way. Why was this?" Seijō said, "Your question is a very appropriate one." The monk persisted, "Why did he not attain Buddhahood by doing zazen in the Meditation Hall?" Seijō replied, "Because he didn't."

A kalpa, or aeon, is the period of time between the creation and the recreation of a universe. Each Great Kalpa, 大劫, is divided into four: formation, existence, destruction, and annihilation. These are again subdivided, and in the end the Great Kalpa consists of eighty small ones. These are again subdivided, smaller fleas on bigger fleas. We are told that Daitsū Chishō Buddha lived 540,000,000 asankhya kalpas. These numbers may seem foolish, but there is something clever in them, in the way that vagueness and definiteness, the infinite and the finite are combined.

There is the world of cause and effect, from which we can never for a moment escape. There is the world of no-cause, no-effect, timeless, spaceless, devoid of beauty and ugliness, right and wrong, good and bad, from which we can escape whenever we will. The monk is asking his question in the commonsense, relative, rational world; Seijō is answering in the absolute, the beyond. They are both right, both wrong.

In chapters 16 and 17 of the *Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law* we are told that the Buddha pretended to die (though in actual fact he was eternal and indestructible) so that people should yearn after him.

.. If they see the Tathagata stay permanently, and do not think that he will become extinct, they will be too familiar and satiated with him to see how rare the chance to see him and know how worthy of respect he is... Therefore the Tathagata says he will pass away, although he will never become extinct.

It goes on:

All the Buddhas, all the Tathagatas teach in the same way. Their teachings are all true, not false, because they teach for the purpose of saving living beings.

All this is disagreeably casuistical. The idea of expedient teaching is in any case false, and impossible to

put into practice. It must have been invented to reconcile all the various teachings afterwards attributed to Buddha. These contrivances 方便法, or parables and analogies, 權法, by which the Buddha is supposed to have tried to portray the truths so difficult to comprehend, are not fit even for Sunday School children.

We are told in the *Hokkekyō*, chapter VII, that Daitsūchishōbutsu did zazen in the Place of Discipline for so many million years, drove away the army of demons and was on the point of achieving Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi, that is, unexcelled and complete enlightenment. Nevertheless he did not attain to it. Thus for aeons he performed zazen with body and soul unmoving, yet he could not manifest the essence of all the Buddhas.

Rinzai's explanation is given in *Rinzai Roku*. He was asked to explain why Daitsūchishōbutsu did zazen in a hall for ten kalpas and could not manifest the Law or attain Buddhahood. He said:

Mahabhijña 大通, means one's real self, that which attains to a no-self nature and formlessness in all places. Jñānabhibhu 智勝, means not receiving [not being attached to] any existence, complete lack of doubt and hesitation under all circumstances. Buddha, 佛, means that which penetrates the pure, shining Dharmadatu.<sup>1</sup> "Sitting in a Meditation Hall for ten kalpas" means Ten Paramitas.<sup>2</sup> "He could not manifest the Law," 佛法不現前, means that Buddha is originally, in his essence, uncreate and unanihilate, —then how should it be manifested! "He could not enter the Buddha-Way" means that a Buddha is not of the nature to become a Buddha.

One of the Ancient Worthies has said, "Buddha is always in the world, but never contaminated<sup>3</sup> by it." Brother!<sup>4</sup> if you want to achieve Buddhahood, do not

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1. The Ground of Being.

2. Charity, 施; purity, 戒; patience, 忍辱; zealous progress, 精進; meditation, 禪; wisdom, 慧; adaptability, 方便; vows, 願; force of purpose, 力; and knowledge, 智.

3. Literally, "dyed."

4. Addressing the questioning monk.

be the servant of things! When thoughts, [desires, likes and dislikes] arise, all the various "things" come into being. When thoughts are extinguished, all the various "things" cease to be. When the mind is not aroused, nothing has any harmful power.<sup>5</sup> Both in this world and beyond it, Buddhas and things [imagined as objective existences] do not appear, and cannot disappear. What people call Great Sayings, and Golden Words, is the provision of attractive medicine for children; they are only outward expressions of Greatness. These Sayings are in themselves nothing. If you see and hear, clearly and spiritually, and before you with mirror-bright enlightenment, an undimmed lamp, you yourself decide the value of all lofty pronouncements. [Moreover] you can attain release [from] by the Great Virtue of the Five Deeds<sup>6</sup> that merit incessant [re-birth in] Hell.

What does Rinzai mean by all this? Just as the Buddha with his demand for a mustard seed from a house which had known no loss by death, led the woman who brought him her dead son to the more general thought of the death of all sons, to the most general thought of universal change, so Rinzai wants us to consider not merely this one case of a great cause with no effect, but of all things in their nature. Why is a cow's tail long? Why is a fox's bushy? Why is a circle round? It is the mind, Rinzai says, that gives longness and bushiness and circularity to things. Wordsworth is more exact:

Both what they half create, and half perceive.

And Rinzai is making another point. Your mind, which gives length to things is itself the length; you are your-

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5. This sentence comes from the *Shinjinmei*. Suzuki translates it, "When the mind is not disturbed, the ten-thousand things offer no offence."

6. These are parricide, matricide, killing an arhat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and destroying the harmony of the fraternity of monks.

self the long thing. (This is the transcendental nature of all things, their own nature, but they also have a scientific, cause and effect nature, of themselves, not given by another.) If you do not ask why a long thing is long, you are a fool. But if you cannot answer it, you are another kind of fool. Nature says, like Dr Johnson, "I will not be put to the question!" but we defy her, and say with Thoreau,

All the past is here to be tried; let it approve itself if it can.

Sometimes, when we feel like it, we answer questions. At other times,

I have no other but a woman's reason;  
I think him so because I think him so.

## THE COMMENTARY

只許老胡知，不許老胡會。凡夫若知，即是聖人。聖人若會，即是凡夫。

You may know the Old Indian, but you are not to analyse him psychologically. An ordinary man who really knows him is a sage, but a sage who has merely discursive knowledge of him is only an ordinary man.

"The Old Indian" is Buddha, Daruma, or Daitō Chishō, or any other such or not such. "Know," 知, is usually used to mean know intellectually, but here means know with a no-knowledge, what the Indians call Prajñā-knowledge. Mumon means that when we are asked a question concerning ordinary knowledge we must always answer this scientific question poetically, at least internally. Emerson says, "Men descend to meet." This "meet" is the 會 of the text. Mumon says, "Never descend!"



The second part of the Commentary is a quotation from Ryūsai Shōshu, dates unknown, a disciple of Rakan Keichin (Jizō)<sup>7</sup>. He ascended the pulpit and declared, "Ordinary people do not know<sup>8</sup> they are ordinary people. Saints do not comprehend<sup>9</sup> that they are saints. When saints comprehend things, they are ordinary people. When ordinary people know things, they are saints." This again derives from the *Platform Sutra*, where Enō says that one enlightened thought,—and we are Buddha. The next thought of illusion,—and we are just Tom, Dick, and Harry.

With regard to the last phrase, "not wanting praise," Mencius says: "There is a heavenly nobility and a human. Benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and fidelity, rejoicing in goodness and being unwearied in it,—this is the heavenly nobility. Public office, lordship, and so on,—this is human nobility.... All men have it in their hearts to desire honour, only they do not realise that this honour is in themselves." But when Mumon says worldly honours he is not only thinking of those bestowed by other men, but also of those bestowed by oneself upon oneself. Psychologically speaking, it was Daitō Chishō's desire for enlightenment that prevented him from getting it during an eternity of time. It was this that blinded the monk and made him ask the questions. All questions are (half) foolish.

## THE VERSE

了身何似了心休	了得心兮身不愁
若也身心俱了了	神仙何必更封侯

Rather than putting the body to rest, rest of heart!

7. See Vol. II, page 66.

8. Are not enlightened.

9. Understand intellectually.

If the mind is at peace, the body knows no grief.  
But if both mind and body are pacified, thoroughly, as one,  
This is the life of perfect sainthood, where praise is meaningless.

Mumon seems to have grasped in the third line what he does not in the first, and which Donne, ante-dating D.H. Lawrence, expresses in:

God made the first Marriage, and man made the first Divorce; God married the Body and Soule in the Creation, and man divorced the Body and Soule by death through sinne, in his fall.<sup>10</sup>

Blake asserts that mind and body are one:

The body is that part of soul perceived by the senses, in this world.

Whitman writes, in *Leaves of Grass*, 48:

I have said that the soul is not more than the body,  
And I have said that the body is not more than soul.

Nevertheless, mind and body have also some kind of separate existence. If we chop off a man's leg, his mind is not correspondingly impaired, apparently. Again, it is a question whether peace of mind as such is a desirable thing. The more sensitive we are the better, and this excitability is relative to our control over it. Blake says that people control their passions because they are weak enough to be controlled. Passion is perhaps the one thing that is above Zen. I would not change, even if I could, my own nervous, unbalanced, unrestfulness for the natural placidity of Whitman's animals, or the supernatural peace that passeth under-

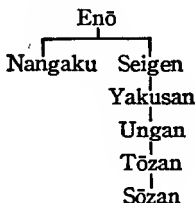
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10. *Sermons*, 1626, No. LXXX.

standing. There is, however, a certain *additional* state of mind in which as Thoreau says, "all fear of consequences is swallowed up in a manly love of truth." It is this perhaps that the Upanishads describe as pouring water into water, Mumon's freedom, and the union of body and soul. But "peace of mind" does not in the least describe it. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is its watchword. I and My Father are one, and I and my father are two. Ice and water are the same thing, but ice is icy, and water is watery.

## Case X

### SŌZAN AND POOR SEIZEI



#### *Dramatis Personae*

The life and work of Sōzan (Tsaoshan), 840-901, was described in Volume II of this series. One of the most interesting anecdotes concerning Sōzan is the following.

One day a monk asked Sōzan, "How can the wordless be expressed?" Sōzan answered, "It is not expressed in this place." The monk said, "Where is it expressed?" Sōzan said; "Last night, at 12 o'clock, I lost three pennies by my bed, 牀頭." "In this place" seems to mean "at this moment," "in reply to your request." The wordless is expressed when it is not asked for. The mystery of life is grasped when we misplace something or lose some money, when it comes on to rain unexpectedly. This is catching the winged joy as it flies, and thus we live in "Eternity's sunrise."

#### THE CASE

曹山和尚因僧問云，清稅孤貧，乞師賑濟，山云，稅闍梨。稅應諾。山曰，青原白家酒，三盞失了，猶道未沾唇。

A monk, Seizei by name, said to Sōzan, "I am a poor destitute monk. I beg you to bestow upon

me the alms of salvation." Sōzan said, "Acarya<sup>1</sup> Seizei!" "Yes, Sir?" replied Seizei. Sōzan said, "Someone has drunk three bowls of the wine of Haku of Seigen, but asserts that he has not yet moistened his lips."

This Case has various interpretations of the conversation itself. Some take the monk who asked the question to be different from Seizei. Some take the wine to be Zen. Some take the monk to be boasting of his spiritual poverty. Some say that when he was called, and answered "Yes, Sir," he showed that he was not really "poor," because he admitted his own possession of a name and personality. Perhaps the best way to take it is an example of the universal greediness of mankind. People drink and drink, and eat and eat, and are never satisfied. People want salvation and enlightenment and deification, and never enjoy what they already have and are. The world must progress, it is true, but it must also stand still. In this sense we must agree with those who say that zazen is not a means (to enlightenment) but an end in itself. So Whitman says:

I lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

## THE COMMENTARY

清稅輪機，是何心行。曹山具眼，深辨來機。然雖如是，且道那裏是稅關梨喫酒處。

Seizei is obsequious, but what is his real state of mind? Sōzan, with his Buddha-eye, sees into the recesses of it, and understands the visitor's meaning. But however this may be so, just tell

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1. Acarya means teacher, master, and is here a term of respect.

me, where and why does Acarya Seizei drink this wine?

In the New Testament wine is often used in a good sense, and here Mumon seems to be asking when Seizei drank this wine, that is, attained the enlightenment of absolute poverty. He means that we must not answer, that is, ask such questions. The question "when?" came in the Case before. Transcendentally speaking, there is no such thing as place and time, cause and effect, life and death, enlightenment and illusion, drinking and not drinking, poverty and riches. Sōzan seems to be taking the hyperbole of drinking so much and saying you haven't even begun to drink yet, and using this transcendentalism as the answer to Mumon's question when Seizei drank the wine: "When didn't he?"

## THE VERSE

貧似范冉	氣如項羽
活計難無	敢與鬪富

His poverty is like Hanzen's;  
 His spirit like that of Kōu.  
 Though he has no commercial system,  
 They are quarelling about riches.

Hanzen, a man of the 2nd century A.D., was going to become Prefect, but the illness of his mother prevented it, and he was forced to put his wife and children in a barrow, and go about as a fortune-teller, sleeping under trees or in the lowest lodging houses for more than ten years, until at last he got a cottage of his own, but even then did not know the taste of millet. The villagers composed a song:

甌中生塵，范史雲，釜中生魚，范萊蕪。

Dust brimming in the rice bin, Han Shiun.  
Fish increasing in the cauldron, Han of Raibu.

Kōu, of the 3rd century B.C., comes in a Nō play in which wood-cutters are going home across a river; the old ferryman, seeing one of them carrying a *Gubijinsō*, a poppy, named after Kōu's mistress, the beauty (*bijin*) Gu, sings of their parting and of his horse Sui. Kōu is renowned for his fighting spirit, like the warriors of the Battle of Maldon. When he was defeated, and in imminent danger of death, he sat carousing in his tent and singing the song which afterwards became famous:

Strength, to drive through a mountain!  
Spirit, to cover the whole earth!  
Now, all is over.  
Sui, not yet dead;  
Gu! Oh, Gu! What is to happen to you?

The last two lines of Mumon's verse are taken from a poem by Sokei, a disciple of Goei, a disciple of Baso.

As for your livelihood, you have not a penny, you say,  
But you are fighting with the master about wealth.

More to the point is what Eckhart says about a truly poor man:

Das ist ein armer Mensch der nicht *will* und nicht *weiss* und nicht *hat*...solange es sein Wille ist den allerliebsten willen Gottes zu erfüllen, solange steht der Mensch nicht in der Armut, von der wir sprechen wollen.

Christ's "Of myself I can do nothing," and Shinran's willingness to go to Hell if that is his fate, are examples of a true poverty. We may take Mumon's praise of Seizei in the Verse to be ironical, but, as said before, Mumon does not blame meaning praise or praise meaning blame. His real aim is to arouse our minds.

## Case XI

### JŌSHŪ'S HERMITS

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Jōshū has already been dealt with in Case I, Case VII, and in the 3rd Volume of this series. We have to think, however, about the kind of monk that Jōshū went to see. Zen monks leave home, enter a monastery, and, after becoming regular monks, undergo training for ten years and upwards. When this is completed, and they have attained a certain degree of enlightenment, they leave the monastery and usually settle down in some temple, living more or less alone, or gathering disciples according to their temperament, ability, and reputation. It is this kind of monk that Jōshū visited. We must not think of Jōshū bawling into a dark smelly little hermitage, nor remember the 18th century hermits who lived on rich men's estates, and who turned the waterfall on and hurried to put on their beards when visitors were announced. Again, we must not associate Jōshū's hermits with Chōmei who lived as a hermit in later life from temperament and world-weariness rather than in order to pursue the Truth in solitude. These *religieux* are to be taken as people on the road to Bodhisattva-hood. Why did Jōshū visit them? Probably he was still a young man, that is to say, not yet eighty years old and living in his own monastery up to the age of 120. The incident must have taken place during his *angya*, which is the journey monks took in the same spirit as 18th century musicians, who travelled, mostly in poverty and on foot, to different countries to learn by listening to various virtuosi.

In the following translation the monks are taken as two, not as one monk at two different times.



## THE CASE

趙州到一庵主處問，有麼有麼。主豎起拳頭。州云，水淺不是泊紅處，便行。又到一庵主處云，有麼有麼。主亦豎起拳頭。州云，能縱能奪，能殺能活，便作禮。

Jōshū went to a hermit's and said, "Anything here? Anything here?" The hermit lifted up his fist. Jōshū said, "The water is too shallow to anchor here," and went away. He went to another hermit's, and said, "Anything here? Anything here?" The hermit lifted up his fist. Jōshū said, "Freely you give, freely you take away. Freely you bestow life, freely you destroy," and made a profound bow.

"Anything here?" means, vulgarly, "What's the latest?" It can also mean, "Have you any Zen?" or, "Have you anything you shouldn't have?" In pious language, it is, "Are you saved?" "Is it well with thy soul?" The question has a special name, 驗主問, Testing Master Question. (Other questions are 呈解問, Bringing up one's own explanation before a master, and 請益問, Asking for the First Principle, so as to gain enlightenment.) We are reminded of something that Thoreau wrote in his *Journal* in 1838:

If thy neighbour hail thee to inquire how goes the world...plant the feet firmly, and will he nill he, dole out to him with strict and conscientious impartiality his modicum of a response.

Holding up the fist is like Gutei's finger, and the Fascist salute. It is Freudian, sexually symbolic, like everything else in the world, but the question remains, how is it done? In Indian symbolism, *musti*, 禪拳,

the meditation fist, shows meditation with the left, and wisdom with the right. Hitler also, I suppose, like Jōshū, could distinguish between the real thing and the false.

What is the water that is too shallow? Too little water means too much earth and rocks, that is, too much Mr Hermit. What is the boat? Rather than Jōshū himself it is free moving, ever-changing truth.

The second hermit, asked the same question, does the same thing. (Both Inoue and Katō think there is only one hermit, interviewed at two different times. Of course the meaning is the same; Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,—were they two persons, or one?)

This Case, as it stands, is not particularly pleasing, even from the point of view of good manners, and anyway, "Comparisons are odious."

## THE COMMENTARY

一般豎起拳頭，爲甚麼肯一箇，不肯一箇。且道語訛在甚處。若向者裏下得一轉語，便見趙州舌頭無骨，扶起放倒，得大自在。雖然如是，爭奈趙州却被二庵主勘破。若道二庵主有優劣，未具參學眼。若道無優劣，亦未具參學眼。

Both stuck up their fists; why is one accepted, the other rejected? Just say, where is the source of confusion between the two? If, in regard to this you can speak a word of understanding, then you realise that Jōshū's tongue has no bone in it. Now he raises up, now he dashes down, in perfect freedom. But though this is so, remember that the two hermits also saw through Jōshū. Further, if you imagine that there is a comparison of superiority and inferiority to be made in regard to the two hermits, you have not an open eye.

Neither have you an open eye if you suppose there is no difference of superiority and inferiority between the two hermits.

"Confusion" here seems to mean mistake. Mumon is trying to get us to make the mistake of "judging" that one monk was wrong, the other right. This is Christ's "Judge not!" But at the end of the criticism Mumon says that "Judge not!" is also wrong, because this is what an animal can do. The difference between the two hermits is the difference between an ordinary man and a Buddha, between confusion and clarity. But whether the leaves of autumn are tossed high in the air, or lie dejected on the ground, they all obey the laws of nature, the laws of their own being. To the musician a note in tune is *in* tune; a note out of tune is *out* of tune,—but it also is *out of tune*. All notes are either *in* tune or *out* of tune, this is *sabetsu*, difference; but all notes are equally in or out of *tune*; this is *byōdō*, sameness. "Speak a word of understanding" does not of course mean all this.

Jōshū was seen through by the two hermits, since what he said to both of them showed his own state of mind. In human affairs, nothing is one-sided. The students examine the teacher; (his) questions show more than (their) answers. The important point to grasp is that this is not an examination by Jōshū of two hermits, but an examination of the reader of the *Mumonkan*. That is to say, just as there is a difference between the states of mind of two apparently the same, so there is a gulf fixed between Jōshū's examination of them and ours of Jōshū. When we judge, ordinarily, we give intellectual and moral marks, and, in addition are either indifferent emotionally, or feel attraction or repulsion to the words or the action. Jōshū does not do this, implies Mumon. One monk fails, the other passes, but Jōshū has no contempt for the one or patronising feeling for the other.

## THE VERSE

眼	流	星	機	掣	電
殺	人	刀	活	人	劍

His eye is a shooting star;  
 The movements of his soul are like lightning.  
 He is a death-dealer,  
 A life-giving sword.

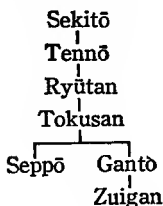
This is in praise of Jōshū's insight into and active absolute freedom of identification with the two hermits. Our eye must be too quick to distinguish life and death, too quick to affirm or deny.

Life is a quickness which my God hath kiss'd.

It is almost too quick even for a word, let alone a definition. Whatever is asserted it is only a stuffed bird whose glass eye stares at us meaninglessly. Shakespeare shows us everywhere that the first hermit, the first clown, is as good as the second, or as the hero, for poetic purposes. The first hermit is dead, or perhaps unborn, the second is alive, but they are both the same to God, to Shakespeare, "for unto him all live."

## Case XII

### ZUIGAN'S CALLING THE MASTER



#### *Dramatis Persona(e)*

In this Case we have a Strindberg-like dramatic soliloquy expressed as a dialogue between Zuigan (Juiyen) and himself. His dates of birth and death are unknown, but he was the spiritual son of Gantō, and was also taught by Kassan, 805-880. Gantō comes in the next, the 13th Case. He died in 887 at the age of sixty. The first meeting of Zuigan and Gantō is given in Vol. II, page 38. When he resided in Zuiganji Temple he governed the monks with great strictness.

#### THE CASE

瑞巖彦和尚，每日自喚主人公，復自應諾。乃云，惺惺著，喏。他時異日，莫受人瞞。喏喏。

Every day Zuigan (Shi)gen used to call to himself, "True Self!" and would answer, "Yes?" "Awake! Awake!" he would cry, and "Yes! Yes!" he would answer. "From now onwards, do not be despised by others, do not let them make a fool of you!" "No, I will not!"

Mumon shows his genius partly in the variety of the

Cases he has chosen. In this one we have set before us a man who, far from forgetting or "denying himself," keeps on thinking of himself, dividing the already illusory, non-existing self into two people. Further, though "by pride fell the angels," he uses his own pride and ambition as the last or first spur to noble mind.

In any case, Zuigan did not make the mistake we all make of looking for the Buddha outside himself, in some person or book or church or messiah or philosophy or creed. He consulted himself, Himself, the Buddha nature, the Nature of the universe, his original, fundamental living principle. This Master is always, like Lamb's snail, at home, though he seems sometimes to be "sleeping, or gone on a journey." This is who is called. But who calls? It is God the creator calling to God the created. It is the Father speaking to the Son. The echo is not something new, something different from the voice; it is the continuation of it. And just as the sound of my voice reverberates through all space, though I hear only a most infinitesimal part in the echo, so the mind "rolls through all things," and "our echoes roll from soul to soul." To many people Zuigan's sitting on a stone all day like a fool and mumbling to himself must seem very different from that of the Christian looking up at the sky and speaking to some far-off "power, *not ourselves*," that will "make for righteousness." But when we remember not Arnold's cold and intellectually thought-up pantheism, but such words as "Christ in us, the hope of glory," "That you may be in me and I in you," and so on, we begin to feel that this talk of inner and outer, of the old man and the new man, is not so anti-theetical and fundamental, not so unzenlike as it seems.

For the founders of religious sects as for all artists and musicians and poets, the differences are more important than they now seem to us. Tchaikovsky and Brahms could see no good in each other. We can see something good in both. So with Calvin and Sir John More, Shinran and Nichiren; we can perceive some

absolute value in all of them.

There remains the question of ambition. It seems odd that Zuigan should be concerned with other people's opinion of him. It is said that Emerson would lecture and go on lecturing sublimely indifferent to whether his audience was listening, sleeping, or gradually disappearing. This seems to me wrong. We must wish to be understood. We must wish to be loved, even though we know that to love is everything and to be loved is nothing, because for the other person to love is at least as important as for ourselves to love.

As for being made a fool of, we don't want to be made a fool of by anything, by a stomachache, a shower of rain, unbuttoned flies, a barking dog, death. A man meets his ideal, writes poetry to his mistress's eyebrow, marries her, and wakes up one day to find that nature has been making a fool of him in order to propagate the species and perpetuate the type. Zuigan wishes to be master, not slave of things.

## THE COMMENTARY

瑞巖老子，自買自賣。弄出許多神頭鬼面。何故弄。一箇喚底，一箇應底。一箇惺惺底，一箇不受人瞞底。認著依然還不是。若也傲他，總是野狐見解。

The master, Zuigan, himself sells and himself buys. He has a lot of puppets of gods and devils that he plays with. For what reason? Look and see! A calling one, an answering one, one that says, "Wake up!" and one that will not be looked down on. But you must not stick to [these appearances] for that is your former mistake. And imitating others [e.g. Zuigan] is only the mental disguise of a fox.

Buying and selling the same things oneself means

making no profit. The puppets are at bottom what Thomson talks about in his *Hymn*:

These as they change, almighty Father! these  
Are but the varied God.

What is the "mistake" that Mumon refers to? Perhaps it is the universal mistake of "looking behind phenomena," taking the masks, personae, as symbols of something else, instead of taking the thing, the time, the place utterly to oneself.

Zuigan's independence reminds us of Christ's "They of old time said unto you..., but I say unto you...", with the extraordinary result that someone writes an "Imitation of Christ," recommending us to imitate the unimitating and inimitable. This again reminds us of the case of Issa who one day went home from someone's house wearing a cow's straw sandals because he couldn't find his own. How he grumbled at his disciple who came the next morning wearing cow's sandals!

Another pertinent reference is Rinzai's well-known sermon:

"Above<sup>1</sup> the mass of red flesh<sup>2</sup> there is a Real Man<sup>3</sup> of undefined status<sup>4</sup>. He is always coming and going out of your six senses<sup>5</sup>. Those who have not yet seen him,—look!" At this time a monk said, "What is this 'Real Man of undefined status'?" Rinzai came down from his seat, caught hold of him, and said, "Speak! Speak!" The monk stood hesitating and wondering what to say. Rinzai pushed him away, saying, "This Real Man of undefined status is only a shit-scraper!"<sup>6</sup> and went back to his room.

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1. "In", or "over and above" in the spiritual sense.

2. Any human being.

3. Zuigan's "True Self".

4. Undefined because indefinable, illimitable.

5. That is, what sees and is seen, what hears and is heard, etc.

6. See Case XXI.



The difficulty is in the "Speak ! Speak !" Sometimes indeed we speak, but it is by accident, a mere flash in the pan. This speaking must be both extempore and deliberate,

Profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

## THE VERSE

學道之人不識眞	只爲從前認識神
無量劫來生死本	癡人喚作本來人

Those in search of the Way do not realise the  
existence and true nature of the self;  
This is because they recognise only the relative  
mind,  
Which is the origin of our eternal transmigra-  
tion;  
Foolish people take it for the true original self.

This verse is different from Mumon's usual, and this is because it is borrowed bodily from Chōsa Keishin (or Keigin) of the Tang Dynasty. He lived in a monastery in Chōsa, hence his name. He was a fellow-disciple with Hyakujō of Nansen.

The idea of transmigration is still obstinately kept by many Zen "masters," with foolish kindness requiring an after-life to make up for the injustice or incompleteness of the present one. One may say that any theological nonsense or superstition is compatible with Zen. I do not think so. A fool, a humourless person, a person with bad taste, an ambitious man, a hater of animals, a "graceless zealot,"—cannot be saved.

In Buddhism there are eight parijñāna, 八種識, kinds of cognition. These are the five senses, to which is added the intellect. The seventh is discriminated from the sixth as calculating and constructive means. This



the cause of all egoism individualising into separate things, and therefore of all illusion, arising from assuming the seeming to be real. The eighth is the basis of all the other "seeds of consciousness." But even this is not the "I," which is thought of as the smouldering end of a rope swung round in the air appearing as a flaming circle because of the slowness of the eye. These eight kinds of cognition are what Mumon, that is, Chōsa calls the origin of our eternal transmigration. To mistake these eight for the Real Man is what distinguishes the ordinary man, 痴人, from the Buddha.

It may be thought that when these eight layers have been peeled off nothing remains. This is not so. But if you ask, "What remains?" The answer is, "Peel them off!"

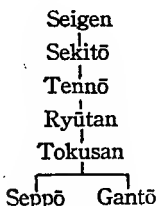
When we speak of "the doctrine of no-soul," this phrase is not to be interpreted by the sixth or seventh or eighth of the consciousness, but by a ninth, the poetical, the religious, the intuitive faculty, which does not, in its own sphere, take no-soul to be the opposite of a soul, nor as a driver's empty seat in a motor-car that is running amok. Wordsworth speaks of "that serene and blessed mood." The "blessed" is all right, but I doubt the "serene." Zuigan sounds rather passionate.





## Case XIII

### TOKUSAN'S BOWL



#### *Dramatis Personae*

The life of Tokusan, (Teshan), 779-865, the disciple and spiritual son of Ryūtan, has been given already in Vol. II, page 29. He lived in very troublous times. In 845, when he was sixty-six years old, more than 40,000 Buddhist temples were destroyed, and 260,000 monks and nuns returned to secular life, by the order of the 15th Emperor of the Tang Dynasty. At this time Tokusan retired to a hermitage in Dokufu Mountain, 獨浮山. Under the next Emperor, Buddhism was once more in favour. Tokusan, now 68, was again persuaded to appear in the world, and a temple was built for him, Tokusan Zen-in, 徳山禪院, from which he took his name. He lived here nineteen years, as famous for his stick as Rinzai was for his "Kwatz!"

An account of Gantō is given on Page 31 of Volume II. He was known for his sharpness and sagacity. When Tokusan died, Gantō was thirty eight, and two years after, together with Kinzan and Seppō, decided to go to Rinzai, but on the way there they heard of Rinzai's death, so all three separated. Each set up a school differing as their temperaments differed. At first Gantō lived by himself, but later he made a hermitage but monks increased like rabbits, and it became a large temple. There were many rocks and crags on the

mountain and from this he derived his name, Rock-head. Just as Tokusan had especially studied the *Kongōkyō*, so Gantō read the *Nirvana Sutra*, that is to say, they both endeavoured to relate sufficient Buddhist background to Zen to save it from eccentricity and excessive individualism. The end of Gantō's life had something in it which many later monks, including Hakuin Zenji, found hard to understand, the terrible cry he uttered when assassinated.

Seppō<sup>1</sup> (Hsuehfeng) was born in the year of Dengyō Daishi's death, 822, six years after Gantō. He was a man of extreme persistence. In the years of their master's death, 865, Gantō and Seppō were travelling, when they were overtaken by a snow-storm, and took refuge in a cottage. Seeing Seppō prepare to spend the night doing zazen as usual, Gantō asked him about himself and his understanding of Zen, and at last said, "Whatever the great masters of Zen may preach, however they expound the sacred writings, of what use is all their learning to another person? That which gushes out from your own heart—that is what embraces all Heaven and Earth!" At these words Seppō reached the final stage of his enlightenment. We may say that this was the result, not so much of Gantō's words, which are plain and simple enough, but of the zazen which he was about to do so unweariedly, just as *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* was the outcome of all Milton's years of dreary political work that were to cost him his eyesight. When Seppō was 47, he went on a pilgrimage to the grave of his first master, built a hermitage there and afterwards a temple, and monks gradually collected round him. As the mountain was always cool, it was called Seppō San, Snow-peak Mountain, from which his own name was derived. He is said to have had never less than fifteen hundred monks. He died in 908 aged eighty-seven, an end as peaceful as Gantō's was violent.

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1. See Vol. II, pages 39-49.

## THE CASE

德山一日托鉢下堂。見雪峯問，者老漢鐘未鳴，鼓未響，托鉢向甚處去，山便回方丈。峯舉似巖頭。頭云，大小德山，未會末後句。山聞，令侍者喚巖頭來，問曰，汝不肯老僧那。巖頭密啓其意。山乃休去。明日陞座，果與尋常不同。巖頭至僧堂前，拊掌大笑云，且喜得老漢會末後句。他後天下人不奈伊何。

One day Tokusan came towards the refectory from the Meditation Hall, carrying his bowls.<sup>2</sup> Seppō called out to him, "Where are you off to with your bowls, when the bell has not rung and the drum has not been struck." Tokusan went back at once to his own room. Seppō told this occurrence to Gantō, who remarked, "Tokusan though he is, he has not penetrated into the deepest truth, the last word of Zen." Hearing of this, Tokusan sent an acolyte to ask Gantō to come, and said to him, "Have you any criticism to make of me?" Gantō whispered his meaning to him. Saying nothing Tokusan took leave of him. The next day, ascending the rostrum, Tokusan was different from before. Gantō, going towards the front of the Hall, clapping his hands and laughing, said, "What a happy thing! The old man has got hold of the last word of Zen. From now onwards nobody will be able to take a rise out of him!"

This kōan must be called a failure inasmuch as there are as many interpretations of it as there are com-

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2. In one version it adds here, "The meal was late".

mentators. Zen begins where the intellect leaves off, and we must be clear to that exact point. We must jump off from the top of a 100 foot high pole, according to Case XLVI, not from a heap of straw or cotton wool.

Inoue Shūten, in his edition of the *Mumonkan*, 無門關の新礎究, says that at this time Tokusan was 81 and getting senile (Seppō was 41, and Gantō 35). Tokusan called Gantō, the latter told him he was slack and at fault. The next day Tokusan "bucked up" a bit and gave them a "hot" sermon. But, we may ask, where is the Zen in all this?

Jimbo Nyōten, in his 無門關講話, says that Gantō whispered "the last word of Zen" to Tokusan, who awoke a wiser if not a sadder man the morrow morn. But this makes the story useless, especially as we are not told what Gantō said. If Hamlet soliloquises in silence, we had better stay at home. Taniguchi Masaharu, in his 無門關の日本的解釋, makes a moral story of it, teaching us not to make a fool of old people. Katō Totsudō, in his 碧巖錄大講座, Vol. XIII, quotes a large number of conflicting ancient commentaries on this Case, but seems to have no very definite opinion himself. Yamashita Gyokai, in 平易に説いた無門關, belies his title, "The *Mumonkan* Explained Easily," by telling us we can only understand this Case by doing zazen on it. Iida Tōin, in his 無門關鑽燄, explains the matter in the following way. Seppō thinks he has made a fool of Tokusan because he appears feeble, and does not reply to his (rhetorical) question. Gantō realises Seppō's mistake, but, with the object of curing him pretends to agree. Gantō whispers to Tokusan the play-acting he has planned. The next day Tokusan gives a sermon out of the ordinary (by saying nothing at all, or by some other means) and Gantō then says, with his eye on Seppō that no one will ever be able to make a fool him again. Gantō wants to teach Seppō that "the last word of Zen" has no connection with trying to outdo your teacher, or with the degree of attainment of one's teacher or anybody else.



Asahina Sōgen, in 無門關提唱 says practically the same as Iida. Shaku Sōen, in 無門關講話, after four pages of description of *takuhatsu*, says that Tokusan, famous for his "thirty blows if you can't speak, and thirty blows if you can," was defeated by Seppō, and that Gantō agreed with him, and secretly urged Tokusan to pull himself together for once. All this, however, has little connection with what Mumon seems to think the most important point, "the last word of Zen." Shibayama Zenkei in his 訓註無門關, simply says that this Case is not one of enlightenment but of kindness and tact. Yasutani in (Shibayama's) 無門關獨語, agrees with him that it is a concerted plan to help Seppō who is of a somewhat headstrong, bullying, but teachable nature.

It is not necessary after all to decide between these and other interpretations. Mumon knew as well as we do, and better, that the Case is obscure. We have three great monks with their various idiosyncrasies, ages, and inter-relations. They are more or less enlightened, and what is of far greater importance, more or less human. We get a glimpse of the goings-on in a Zen temple in China of the 9th century, the rivalries, the internecine (spiritual) warfare, the rumours and insinuations, the everlasting swing to and fro of formality and eccentricity, the problem of age and youth, and with it all a serious lightness, a humorous earnestness, a "let truth be the winner" spirit that cannot be paralleled in the monasteries of Europe. The problem for Zen has always been, how to win without defeating others, and no doubt what Mumon wants us to do is to be fed by the same-and-different spirit of Tokusan, Gantō, and Seppō, not to award prizes or medals to any of them.

## THE COMMENTARY

若是末後句。巖頭德山，俱未夢見在。檢點將來，好似一棚傀儡。

As for what is called "the Last Word of Zen",

neither Gantō nor Tokusan ever heard of such a thing. When you look into the matter, they're only a set of puppets.

Fire cannot burn fire. A sword cannot cut itself. When you try to explain a joke, that's another one. "The last word of Zen" is not separable from him who utters it. Puppets, which are said to have been invented in China about 1000 B.C., are imitations of men, but Tokusan and Gantō and Seppō are themselves puppets, imitations of something. What is this "something"? According to the Bible, man was made in the image of God, but if we take this as Eckhart's Godhead, how can we be an image of the unimageable? Mumon wants us to answer this unanswerable question by being ourselves the abyss, by being ourselves imageless, thoughtless, emotionless, beautyless, moralityless, truthless, —but also nothingless, and indifferenceless.

## THE VERSE

識得最初句	便會末後句
末後與最初	不是者一句

If you understand the first word of Zen  
 You understand the last;  
 But these two words  
 Are not one word.

"An ordinary man is the Buddha." This is the first and the last word of Zen. These two are the same; they are one word. But when we say this, the affirmation of the identity still separates the two as it tries to unite them. It is true that they are one, but not true as we say it, only true as it is lived. So Tokusan and Gantō have no idea of the last word of Zen. Mumon says that these two words are not one word, they are two words. This is also true. The two are one, not

two. The two are two, not one. Why does Mumon choose the latter of the two equally true, contradictory facts? Because it is more true than the equally true former. As Shelley says,

The One remains, the many change and pass,  
but the many are many, as Stevenson says:

The world is so full of a number of things,  
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

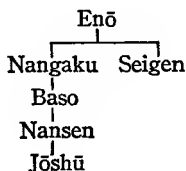
When we really look at an insect or a leaf (and few people do this) we do not at first see the unity; education teaches us that; Emerson says:

And universal nature, through her vast  
And crowded whole, an infinite parquet,  
Repeats one note.

But after all this we must come back to the variety of life, every leaf different, no two the same. As Mumon says, "The two are not one," and this is in the will.

## Case XIV

### NANSEN'S CAT-KILLING



#### *Dramatis Personae*

Nansen (Nanchuan) was born in 748 and at the age of nineteen left home for a priest life. He studied under Nangaku, especially the *Ryōgakyō* and the *Kegon-gyō*. He was enlightened by Baso and set up his own dwelling in 795 when he was forty eight. He died in 834, aged 87, after 58 years of monastic life.

As far as cats are concerned, it is forbidden to keep any animal in a temple, but this rule is actually disregarded, especially in regard to cats, which are even said to have been brought to Japan together with the Sutras, for the mice make fine nests out of the sacred paper. We may compare this rule with that of *The Ancrene Riwele*, where the two nuns may have one cat only, and no other animal. I myself think that to have a cat is more important than to have a Bible.

Jōshū has come already in Case I and Case VII.

#### THE CASE

南泉和尚因東西兩堂爭貓兒，泉乃提起云，大衆道得即救。道不得，即斬却也。衆無對。泉遂斬之。晚趙州外歸。泉舉似州。州乃脫履，安頭上而出。泉云，子若在，即救得貓兒。

Once, when the monks of the Western and Eastern Halls were quarrelling about a cat, Nan-



乃王老師  
 西堂首座  
 奚唯猫兒  
 斬

# CASE XIV

Nansen Killing the  
 Cat, by Sengai

The inscription says:

Kill! Kill!

Not only the cat,  
 But the leaders of  
 both parties.

Including Wang the  
 Old Master him-  
 self!

(Wang is Nansen.)



sen, holding up the cat, said, "You monks! If (any of) you can speak (a word of Zen) I will spare the cat, otherwise I will kill it!" No one could answer, so Nansen killed it. In the evening, Jōshū came back from somewhere, and Nansen told him what had happened. Jōshū thereupon took off his shoe, put it on his head, and walked off. Nansen said, "If only you had been there, I could have saved the cat!"

The Western Hall was for the teaching monks, those of the Eastern Hall engaged in practical matters. This was in imitation of the court practice in regard to civil and literary affairs. It is easy to imagine the differences that occurred between them.

What the monks were quarrelling about is left to the imagination. Inoue says it was the parentage of the cat, which seems a problem that only God could solve. Katō says it was about whether it has the Buddha nature or not. Whatever it was, the monks were certainly engaged in the most un-zennish occupation of asserting one of a pair of relatives. In the Verse of Case IX of the *Shōyōroku*, which is this same episode, we have, "Old Ō<sup>1</sup> shows up their relativity," 王老師能驗正邪, and the *Jakugo* comments: "Like a mirror he reflects their relativity, without any distortion of his own," 明鏡當臺, 物來斯鑑. We must first consider two questions. What is a cat? Under what circumstance is it right to kill a cat? We may answer these two questions in two ways: from the Buddhist, or Christian, or human point of view; and from the Zen point of view. "Zen" here means "my Zen," which is supposed to be the same as that of Nansen and Jōshū, but I wish to use the word Zen to mean the very deepest intuitions of mankind; whether these intuitions are the same or

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1. Nansen's secular name.

not doesn't matter in the least, though we must be deeply aware of the sameness or difference. Thus the (deepest) Buddhist and (deepest) Christian and (deepest) human point of view will be after all the Zen point of view.

A cat is a (living) thing, and as such, that is, as a thing, has the Buddha nature, that is, the power, the potentiality to change into something different, more complicated (though in actual fact it may "degenerate," that is, change into something more simple). This is the teaching of Buddhism. Zen is the putting into practice, that is into (one's own) consciousness this teaching, so that a cat is not only a Buddha as a possibility, but as an already achieved fact in our (transcendental) experience. God is not a God of the unborn, for unto Him all are born.

Concerning the question of the rightness or wrongness of killing cats, we may distinguish four stages. The first is that it is right, all right, to kill a cat. This is the non-moral, primitive attitude often seen in children and sometimes in adults. It is a kind of Zen, or pre-Zen. The second is that it is wrong to kill a cat, as a humane person. This is perhaps the Buddhist attitude, though actually the love of animals is hardly inculcated, and non-killing is a somewhat superstitious idea based on the belief in reincarnation. Third, it is "right" to kill a cat, if it is a cat beyond good and evil. Nansen's deed is supposed to be this, though it also includes a kind of threatening the monks with causing their master to break the Buddhist law by their inability to "say a word of Zen." A cat killed to protect another creature, the killing of Hitler, mercy-killing and so on would all resemble Nansen's. The point of the story is not that the death of a cat or a thousand cats is nothing compared to the salvation of a human soul (which is in any case more than debatable), but that any activity as saviours or saved or unsaved is to be beyond relativity. However, though our actions



sometimes or often may be absolute, they are always relative, and a cat is killed, or not. We come then to the fourth point of view beyond the orthodox Zen attitude, in which it is "wrong" to kill a cat in that we must

oppose to nature

A deeper Nature.

We are in a world which requires us, of strict and unavoidable necessity to kill other creatures in order that we ourselves may live.

Orthodox Zen answers, "I will to kill, and will to be killed." My own answer is, "Yes, I will kill, but unwillingly, and be killed in the end, unwillingly, but I don't agree with it all, for my self or for others."

From the orthodox Zen point of view Nansen was right in killing the cat, because any action whatever must be considered right if it is performed from the absolute. The problem is then, can a finite, imperfect, humourless, hypocritical, stupid, self-deceiving, insensitive, half-educated animal, alias a human being, really act from the absolute? To put the question more concretely and pertinently, would Nansen do the same thing again under the same circumstances? If not, and if, on thinking over the matter, he could find a better way of managing the affair, we must say that his acting from the absolute had too strong a flavour of the relative about it. On the spur of the moment, Nansen put not only the monks, who he should have known would be dumb, but himself also in an awkward position. They could not say a word of Zen. Was Nansen's killing the cat a word of Zen, or was it not rather keeping a foolish promise that he should have broken? This even Nansen himself realised, as is shown by his saying at the end, "I could have saved the cat if...." In any case, had Nansen been very fond of cats, he would never have done what he did. In this sense he is like Gutei, who very gladly cut of somebody else's finger.

But if Nansen had cut off his own, like Eka, he might be respected for his courage, but not for his common sense.

The most interesting part of the Case is Jōshū's putting his shoe or straw sandal (one, I suppose) on his head, and going away. Jōshū showed his "indifference" to the problem of saying a word of Zen, and to the killing of the cat by the "indifference" of the shoe, which is equally willing to be dragged about by the foot in the dust, or to be put in the place of highest honour, on the head. However, this action of his is not in the least symbolical. Every action of his, we must suppose, was "indifferent," and every action of other people seen "indifferently," that is, without differentiation of this and that, his and mine, killing and not killing, putting a shoe on the foot or the head. Nansen's Zen seems to me half-baked, Jōshū's far superior, but still eccentric. Nansen's violence is similar to that of Christ in the cleansing of the temple. Both actions were probably spontaneous and unplanned, not therefore good, not therefore bad. Follow your intuitions about both and let your intuitions change as they will, with them.

## THE COMMENTARY

且道趙州頂草鞋意作麼生。若向者裏下得一轉語，便見南泉令不虛行。其或未然，險。

Just say, what is the meaning of Jōshū's putting his shoe on his head? If you can express the meaning of his words and actions, they were not in vain, but if not, you are in danger.

Mumon's commentary is rather milk for babes after the strong meat of the Case. Anyway, it is not necessary to explain or express Jōshū's meaning, because first of all he had none, and second, we are not put on

this earth for a short time to express other people's meanings, but our own. If I had come back and Nansen had told me what had occurred, what would I have done or said? Suppose I butted him in the stomach as a punishment for his scatter-brained and hysterical action; he might have ulcers or a tendency to appendicitis. Suppose I picked up the cat's gory remains and rubbed them all over his face,—what good would that do? Suppose I said, coldly and hatefully, "I think you behaved like a 9th century Chinese Zen monk." Suppose I burst into tears for the cat. (As Stevenson said, you remember, of the dog that its owner was beating, "It's God's dog, and I am here to protect it!") Suppose I said, "Bring me another cat, and the monks again!" Suppose—but Jōshū was indeed a genius. It was a cosmic gesture.

## THE VERSE

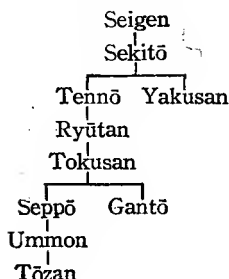
趙州若在	倒行此令
奪却刀子	南泉乞命

If Jōshū had been there,  
 Everything would have been done the other way  
 round.  
 He would have snatched away the knife,  
 And Nansen would have begged for his life.

This is very good. "Nansen's begging for his life" means that Jōshū would have taken the initiative and Nansen would have had to acknowledge Jōshū's spiritual invincibility. This implies no competition, but simply "Let the best man win!" that is, let Best be master. Nansen wanted (more or less) the cat saved, but the folly, indecision, attachment to words, and indolence of the monks won the day. If Christ and Thoreau and Bach and Shakespeare had not been born....

## Case XV

### TŌZAN'S STRIPES



#### *Dramatis Personae*

Ummon comes in five out of the forty eight Cases of the *Mumonkan*, and in eighteen in the hundred of the *Hekiganroku*. His anecdotes (those easy to translate) occupy twenty eight pages of Volume II of this Series. He was the founder of one of the Five Branches of the Zen Sect, but after about two hundred years the Ummon branch disappeared. Like Bach and Shakespeare and Christ, he was too much for his followers. He was enlightened by Bokujū, 睦州, whose quality can be seen in two episodes.

Asked by a monk "What is the doctrine that transcends all Buddhas and Masters?" he immediately held aloft his staff, and said to the assembled monks, "I call this a staff; what do you call it?" The monk was silent. Again he held up the staff, saying, "The doctrine transcending [the teaching of] all the Buddhas and masters,—was not that what you asked me about?" The monk was still silent.

This is excellent. Holding up the staff is like Christ's breaking the bread (without any further commentary or symbolism). It is the half of life, the other half being the equally inevitable lowering of the staff and

the eating of the bread.

The other episode of Bokujū is his breaking of Ummon's leg (by accident) and enlightening him (by accident) when shutting a heavy door. This "by accident" shows that acting from the absolute is only partial and moved with chance, not to speak of less charming elements, such as rudeness and ruthlessness and obstinacy and abruptness. What did Bokujū do then? Did he push out the broken leg and shut the door properly? Did he apologise? Did he piggy-back him to the hospital? As Byron says, speaking of death and marriage,

The future states of both are left to faith,  
For authors fear descriptions might disparage  
The worlds to come of both, or fall beneath.

So the episodes of Zen all end with a satori or a (continued) stupidity. We sometimes want them to begin where they leave off.

Tōzan is distinguished from the co-founder of the Sōtō Branch by calling the former Jōshū Tōzan, 襄州洞山, and the latter Kinshū Tōzan, 筠州洞山, after the places where they lived.<sup>1</sup> Tōzan was born far from Ummon and came a long way to see him. He appears in Case XVIII, one of the most famous of Zen kōans.

## THE CASE

雲門因洞山參次，門問曰，近離甚處。山云，查渡。門曰，夏在甚處。山云，湖南報慈。門曰，幾時離彼。山云，八月二十五。門曰，放汝三頓棒。山至明日，却上問訊。昨日蒙和尚放三頓棒，不知過在甚麼處。門曰，飯袋子，江西湖南，便恁麼去。山於此大悟。

Tōzan came to learn from Ummon, and was asked by him, "Where have you come from?"

1. Their names are respectively Shusho, 守初, and Ryōkai, 良介.

"From Sato," he replied. "Where were you during the summer?" "I was at Hōji Temple in Konan Province." "When did you leave there?" "On the twenty fifth of August." Ummon burst out, "A beating is what you want!" The next day Tōzan came and knelt before Ummon, and said, "Yesterday I was (to be) beaten by you. I did and said nothing I shouldn't. What did I do wrong?" Ummon said, "You dirty big belly bag! What did you come from Kōzei and Konan for?" Suddenly Tōzan came to a realisation.

The 放汝三頓棒 has various explanations. Some take it as, "I give you sixty blows," some as, "You deserve sixty blows." One commentator says that letting him off the punishment is more painful than giving him the sixty stripes. I doubt it. It is better to think that Tōzan was actually struck, and spent a sleepless night pondering on the indignity of it.

"Summer," 夏, read *ge* here, has a special meaning. In India, during this time there is the rainy season, when the monks cannot go out and preach. They therefore gather (this is from the time of Sakyamuni) in a certain place for religious devotion, mild austerities, and religious exercises. In the Zen Sect it is called *ango*, 安居, *ge-ango*, 夏安居, or *u-ango*, 雨安居; the beginning of the time, *kessei*, 結制, and the end, *kaisei*, 解制.

No doubt Tōzan thought he had done something good and meritorious in travelling all those hundreds of miles to receive the mysterious Truth from a real teacher, but it was just this very point, the very thing for which he might have received a medal, that Ummon picked on to curse him for. It is not so much our sins, which are obvious weakness and vulgarity, as our virtues that we need to be delivered from. Even if the Rich Young Man had given up all his wealth to feed the poor he would still be farther from Heaven than Judas

or Ananias. "Forgive us our good deeds, as we forgive those who do good deeds to us."

Tōzan, confronted by a Man, Ummon, behaved like the swine before pearls. He spoke of Ummon as though he were an ordinary man, hardened in superficialities, in news, in gossip, in trivial things like the annihilation of mankind, or how to get rich quick. The most dangerous thing in the world is to think you understand something. Running all over China, or all through the Bible is no help.

The beating that Tōzan received was different from ordinary beatings; he did not feel Ummon was doing it to teach him something, or for his good. It was just Nature beating him. "The Lord hath given pain; The Lord hath taken away pain; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

## THE COMMENTARY

雲門當時便與本分草料，使洞山別有生機一路，家門不致寂寥。一夜在是非海裏著到。直待天明再來，又與他注破。洞山直下悟去，未是性燥。且問諸人，洞山三頓棒，合喫不合喫。若道合喫，草木叢林，皆合喫棒。若道不合喫，雲門又成誑語。向者裏明得，方與洞山出一口氣。

If Ummon at that time, by giving him the fodder of the sect, had shown him that One Way of Living Activity, it would not have become extinct.

All night Tōzan wallowed in the waves of the sea of Yes and No until he could get nowhere, and, when long-awaited dawn broke, again went to Ummon, and had his eyes opened by him, and was suddenly enlightened, but he was not a seasoned man yet.

Now I ask all of you: Was Tōzan's being beaten right or wrong? If it was right, then everything

in the universe should be beaten; if it was wrong, then Ummon was a swindler. If you understand this clearly, then you and Tōzan breathe the same air.

The "fodder," is the blows and shattering cries (almost war-whoops) of the Sect.

Mumon makes a serious charge here that Ummon, by his weakness, in not shouting and beating more, not only did not give Tōzan the opportunity for a deeper enlightenment, but in the end brought about the extinction of his own Branch of Zen. This latter was due partly to Ummon's wilfulness and eccentricity, in other words his genius, and this is not entirely unconnected with beating people and shouting at them less than more mediocre Zen masters.

Mumon's question about Ummon being right or wrong in beating Tōzan reminds us of Hamlet's "Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?" No man has the right or duty to strike any other person, or even a fly. On the other hand, every thing in the world must be beaten, and is in fact always being beaten. This is the meaning of what Pater says in *Marius the Epicurean*, the double feeling we have which is deeper than the Zen resolving of it:

He could not kill the snakes, for they already  
suffered, in being what they were.

Mumon's intellectual alternatives, therefore, must as always be taken poetically, so that we accept both without affectation. This was what Tōzan experienced in his enlightenment, but we must always go back from the poetical to the unpoetical:

Tasks in hours of insight willed  
Must be in hours of gloom fulfilled.



## THE VERSE

獅子教兒迷子訣  
無端再叙當頭著

擬箭跳躑早翻身  
前箭猶輕後箭深

The lion has a round-about-way of teaching her cubs.

Intending to urge them on she kicks them away,  
And they soon redress themselves and charge back.

Heedlessly he came back to Ummon but was checkmated;

The first arrow was only a scratch, but the second one went deep.

This is rather feeble, and Mumon seems to be praising Ummon here, "Checkmated" means by calling Tōzan a "full-belly." "The first arrow" was beating him, the second arrow was showing Tōzan that there is Someone who does not go from place to place, who is without shadow of turning, and this is Tōzan himself.

## Case XVI

### UMMON'S SEVEN-FOLD ROBE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

These are Ummon, and the person(s) he spoke to.

#### THE CASE

雲門曰，世界恁麼廣闊。因甚向鐘聲裏披七條。

Ummon said, "The world is vast and wide; for what is it you put on your seven-piece robe at the sound of the bell?"

Probably what happened was this. The bell for the sermon had rung and Ummon watched the monks preparing to assemble, scurrying to and fro with robes flying. When he had ascended the "pulpit," the monks having now calmed their spirits with the chanting of the sutra, Ummon said to them, "When the bell rings, you hurry to put on your robes, forgetting the vast universe, the flaming stars, the empty spaces between them, the infinity of worlds, the eternity of time!" The interesting point is that Ummon is urging the monks to one extreme from whence he will drive them back to the other. If any monk comes to him drivelling of eternity and infinity, he will soon let him have the taste of a very finite and temporal stick. Ummon is attacking his monks in their Zen, or at least their zazen, for their intentness and concentration on what they are doing. What he wants to teach them is that "Patriotism is not enough." Firm and steadfast belief in half-gods, and the resolution to die for them is not enough.

# CASE XVI

Ummon, by Sengai

The inscription is  
the words of the Case  
itself.





To concentrate on rousing one's lips or God's lips is good as far as the concentration goes, but there is too much omitted, and as Hamlet says, anything lacking spoils all that is not. When we put on our clothes, as Carlyle says in *Sartor Resartus* we put on the clothes of the universe.

The Art of Tea is to drink the universe, past, present, and future, in each sip. The world is vast, but the sound of the whole is heard in a bell, whether marriage, funeral, prison, school, or cow. On the one hand, every hair of our head is numbered, every thread of our clothing. On the other, we have thoughts that wander through eternity. Each is nothing without the other. Alternately, also they are still nothing. When one is All, one is one, and All is all, but not otherwise.

## THE COMMENTARY

大凡參禪學道，切忌隨聲逐色。縱使聞聲悟道，見色明心，也是尋常。殊不知衲僧家騎聲蓋色，頭頭上明，著著上妙。然雖如是，且道聲來耳畔，耳往聲邊。直饒響寂雙忘，到此如何話會。若將耳聽，應難會。眼處聞聲，方始親。

In general, learning the way and grasping Zen means avoidance of attachment to sounds and forms. Though through hearing a sound there may be realisation, or from seeing the form of an object the mind may be enlightened, nevertheless this is the ordinary way of things. Especially you Zen monks do not understand how to guide sound, use form, see clearly the value of each thing, each activity of the mind. But though this is so, just tell me! Does the sound come to the ear, or does the ear go to the sound? But when sound and silence are forgotten, are both forgotten, what can

you say of this state? If you listen with your ear, it is hard to hear truly, but if you listen with your eye, then you begin to hear properly.

Mumon speaks first about taking sights and sounds as such, and not craving or abhorring them. The two famous examples are of Kyōgen, becoming enlightened when he swept a stone against a bamboo, and Reiun, who attained realisation while gazing at plum blossoms. However, to hear something unusual in the sound of a stone striking a bamboo, or in the sight of a flower blooming is a kind of mistake. Everything is as natural as it possibly can be.

The question of the origin of sound is raised in the *Suramgama Sutra*, 首楞嚴經, the 3rd Chapter.

Buddha said, "The sound of the bell continues during a space of time; how do we become conscious of it? Does the sound come from the ear, or the ear go to the origin of the sound? If it does not go [one way or the other] there is no hearing. For this reason, it must be understood that hearing and sound are neither special. We mistakenly put hearing and sound in two [different] places. Originally it is not a matter of cause and effect or of natural law<sup>1</sup>.

All this is a particular example of the general teaching of the Lankavatara Sutra, to be seen in Suzuki's translation, Chapter 2, part IV and Chapter 2, part XXXV, 159, 160.

The hearing by the eye and so on, the interchange of the senses is one of the marks of a Buddha, 六根互用.

The difficult part of the present Commentary is Mumon's criticism of being enlightened by particular sounds or sights. All sounds and sights have the same because infinite value, and to single out one above all others is just what the common run of people do in their attachment to particular things and people. Mu-

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1. Quoted in *Kanchū Mumonkan*.

mon is being a little capricious here, because the particular sensation is supposed to include in it all the sensations of the universe, and thus be enlightenment itself. However, Mumon knew that in fact enlightenment is at various depths, and he is warning monks not to rest satisfied with this "commonplace" realization.

## THE VERSE

會則事同一家	不會萬別千差
不會事同一家	會則萬別千差

If you are enlightened, all things are as though of one great family,

But if not, everything is separate and disconnected.

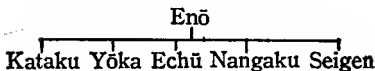
If you are not enlightened [it makes no difference anyway because] all things are as of one great family.

And if you are enlightened [this also makes no difference to reality, in which] every single thing is different from every other thing.

The first two lines are from the standpoint of enlightenment or not, the second two from the beyond-enlightenment-and-non-enlightenment standpoint. The interesting thing is that the relative judgement and the absolute judgement come to the same conclusion,—that all things are different, and that at the same time all things are identical. In the practical sphere, what corresponds to this philosophical transcendentalism is, "Thirty blows if you can say something, thirty blows if you can't."

## Case XVII

## ECHŪ'S THREE CALLS



### *Dramatis Personae*

Echū (Huichung) seems to have died at the age of more than a hundred years in 775. He comes in the *Hekiganroku* twice, in Case XVIII where he asks the Emperor Shuku-sō, 756-763 to make him a seamless stupa, one with the form of his silence; and in Case XCIX, where he teaches the same Emperor that onself and the Buddha are not *two* identical things, but two *identical* things. During this period Buddhism was more patronised than at any other. Echū was a spiritual son of Enō, and the fame of his virtues reached the capital, where he was summoned to appear. Unlike the 6th Patriarch who refused (see the *Rokusodangyō*, Chapter IX), Echū accepted the invitation.

There were five kinds of attendants, one for burning incense, one as a scribe, one for attending on visitors, one for baths and medicine, and one for clothes and eating utensils. This particular attendant is thought to be Ōshin, afterwards of Mount Tangen, mentioned in the 18th Case of the *Hekiganroku*. He became the spiritual son of Echū.

## THE CASE

國師三喚侍者，侍者三應。國師云，將謂吾辜負汝，元來却是汝辜負吾。

The National Teacher called the attendant three times, and three times he answered. The National



Teacher said, "I thought I had transgressed against you, but it seems that you transgressed against me."

This Case like No. XIII, must also be called a kind of failure since everybody has his own interpretation of what happened. The reason for this is the lack of words. Echū called, once. How? Lazily, intensely, meaninglessly, in a casual way, in a Zen way? The attendant answered, once. How? The second, and third times, were they different, or the same, on the part of both caller and responder? And what is the meaning of what Echū says at the end? Is he saying that the attendant was wrong after all, or that both were wrong? Mumon's Commentary speaks ill of Echū and well of the attendant, but this may have the opposite meaning.

When one person calls to another, he calls as one man to another man; or as one Buddha to another Buddha. Something in his manner or tone of voice shows clearly which it is. If I have been listening to Bach (when it is played properly) and I say to someone, "How was it?" I speak as a Buddha, to a Buddha, of a Buddha. When I receive my salary, the reverse is the case, though this of course is not proper, since money is necessary not only for life but for the music of Bach itself.

The words of Echū may be taken in this way. "I thought your lack of enlightenment was due to the poorness of my teaching (calling), but I see that you are lacking in earnestness and zeal by the ordinariness of your three responses." To put the same thing in a different way, "All the sin and confusion of the world is due to my own sin and confusion, for I and others are one thing. But in the same way you are responsible for it all, for you and others are one thing." There is a democracy of responsibility, an equality of transgression, a fraternity of impotence which is also a precious, a human thing.

We have a somewhat similar anecdote of Nan-in (Nanyin), asking a newly-arrived monk, "Where have you come from?" Upon the monk's answering, "From Kanjō, (Hanshang)," Nan-in said, "You are wrong; I am wrong." Nan-in means, "I am wrong to ask you an absolute question, and you are wrong to give a relative reply." The critic explains (away) the poetry, and is wrong. The poet writes poetry for the unpoetical critic, so he is wrong too.

Another way of looking at the matter is this. Echū calls Ōshin. "Somewhere a voice is calling." Someone calls, we think, someone is called. But as Laotse says, the real person is nameless, egoless, soul-less, person-less, somebody-less. Echū is "realising" this as he calls Ōshin. Ōshin is wrong to answer, but Echū was wrong to call. God should not have created the world in the first place. That was the Big Mistake which mankind is even now trying to rectify with a big bomb. Thus the Case is a joke, but it needs a very strong and delicate sense of humour to perceive this kind of cosmic joke.

Two classical comments on this case may be given. A monk asked Hōgen, "What is the meaning of the National Teacher's calling the attendant?" Hōgen said, "Ask me some other time."

This is a kind of sublime indifference, based on that equality of all times and places which goes along with their inequality. This time, another time, calling, answering, not calling, not answering,—all have the same inexhaustible meaning.

A monk asked Jōshū the same question. He answered, "It is like a man writing in the dark; the letters are not quite right, but they are legible."

When we write in the dark we must write more or less automatically, physically, thought-lessly, letting the hand have its own way. Again, the writing is crude, like the simple calling and answering, with no Buddhistic flourishes of Zen paradoxes, but the action is clear.

## THE COMMENTARY

國師三喚，舌頭墮地。侍者三應，和光吐出。國師年老心孤，按牛頭喫草。侍者未肯承當，美食不中飽人餐。且道那裏是他辜負處。國淨才子貴，家富小兒嬌。

The National teacher called three times. His tongue fell to the ground [from talking too much]. The attendant answered three times, sending out a corresponding glory. The National Teacher, getting old and lonely, pushed the cow's head down to the grass. The attendant would have none of it; delicious food is not suitable for a man who is satiated. Just say, in what did the transgressing consist? When the country is prosperous, rich children are too proud [to eat plain food].

The expression "his tongue fell to the ground," which appears in Case VIII of the *Hekiganroku*, Engo's *chakugo* to the Case itself, comes originally from an anecdote concerning Rajūsanzō, that is, Kumarajiva. "Corresponding glory" means that the attendant, Ōshin, answered absolutely, just as Echū called absolutely. "Putting down the cow's head to the grass" comes from an ancient Indian saying, and appears in the Verse of Case LXXVI of the *Hekiganroku*.

The last sentence is said to come from *Myōshin Hōkan*, 明心寶鑑, and means that in this period, the 8th century, Buddhism and Zen were popular, and masters and disciples become indolent like Echū and Ōshin, just calling to each other and answering.

What was the transgression? Commentators do not attempt to explain, fearing, no doubt, that the mocking ghost of Mumon will haunt them for the temerarious wallowing in relativity. The answer is, the fall of

things into consciousness, and again into self-consciousness. To live is to transgress. To err is (to be a) human (being). This is part of what Buddha realised under the Bodhi tree. "The wages of sin, that is, of life, is death." Death without life is impossible. Nirvana is release from life, from life and death, calling and answering. This was the Indian, the Buddhist idea.

The Zen, the Chinese experience was that this was only half Nirvana. The other half was, not to be released from life and death, from calling and answering. So we must call as not calling, not call as calling, answer as not answering, not answer as answering,—a tall order, indeed, and how many, many years it must take even to approach this condition.

## THE VERSE

鐵枷無孔要人擔  
欲得撐門并挂戶

累及兒孫不等閑  
更須赤腳上刀山

He must carry the hole-less iron cangue,  
And his descendents too can have no peace or  
rest.

If you wish to support your religion and cause  
it to flourish

You must climb a mountain of swords with bare  
feet.

A wooden cangue, with a hole in it for the head, can be borne, but a heavy iron one, with no hole in it at all, is something we see in dreams only. An iron flute with no holes in it is another Zen metaphor of something the intellect cannot deal with.

The "hill of knives" is found in Hell together with "trees of swords." An account is given in the Long Agama Sutra, 長阿含經, the 19th Chapter. This is a Hinayana Sutra, and in the Section of Hell we read

that there is a Sword Forest, 500 yojanas<sup>1</sup> in length, and in breadth, into which culprits are driven. A hurricane arises, and blowing through the forest, the leaves (= blades) fall upon them. Dropping on their arms, these are sliced off; on their legs, these are lopped off. The remaining body and head,—there is no place that is not lacerated by them. Soon, beaked birds perch on their heads and peck out both eyes. In the extreme anguish, and from a thousand agonies, shrieks of pain and ghastly misery fill the air.

This is all very charming, but not exactly a "hill" of swords. In a little-known Nō play, *Utaura*, 歌占, when at last Kōgikumarū has found his long-lost child, after wandering all over the country fortune-telling, 占, he dances and sings a Hell-dance. He tells of various cold and hot hells, and of the Sword-Forest Hell. Notes<sup>2</sup> explain it as being a forest in which the leaves are swords, the flowers swords, the fruit swords. When the damned climb up the trees to assuage their hunger, the swords turn downward; as they climb down again in despair, the swords turn upward. "All they climb the hill of swords, 刀山, their feet are sliced to pieces." This "hill of swords" is explained as a hill of which the ground is planted with upturned swords.

Both the Nō play and Ummon are probably referring to popular Buddhist writings other than the sutras in which the sadistic imagination of the writers equalled or surpassed that of Dante, who in Canto XII of the *Inferno* describes how the lost souls are turned into trees, whose leaves are eaten by Harpies:

L'Arpie, pascendo poi delle sue  
Fanno dolore.

What Mumon says here is not very different from Kierkegaard's emendation of Christ's words into, "Narrowness is the Way." However, Mumon, though often

1. One Yojana is the distance an army can march in a day.

2. By 大和日建樹.

sadistic, seems to have very little masochism, and is saying that the painfulness of the experience is necessary for the deepening of life. What does this mean for our actual life? Are we to sin that grace may abound? Are we to seek occasions for grief over and above those which heredity and chance bring us? Not directly, of course, but by making ourselves, or allowing ourselves to become more and more sensitive to more and more things. Here is a man, a cockroach, a matchstick, a distant lamp; Christ died in blood for these; Buddha sweated under a tree for them; Echū called to them; Ōshin answered them.

The illustration of the cangue is a happy one. It is a large square slab of wood made in two parts locked together round the criminal's neck. We all wear the cangue of relativity, and the punishment is made to fit the crime. When we study Zen, however, we find ourselves with the same old cangue, but there is a difference. It has no hole in it (the calling and the answering have nothing between them). It doesn't fit us. It is heavier than before; we are more uncomfortable than ordinary people, who are pretty used to theirs, who are usually proud of it, and often decorate it with medals and badges.

## Case XVIII

### TÔZAN'S THREE POUNDS OF FLAX

#### *Dramatis Personae*

This Tōzan is the remarkable disciple of the still more remarkable Ummon. He has come already in Case XV. Some of the easier anecdotes concerning him are given in Volume II, pages 141-5.

#### THE CASE<sup>1</sup>

洞山和尚因僧問，如何是佛，山云，麻三斤。

A monk asked Tōzan, "What is the Buddha?" He replied, "Three pounds of flax."

What is the Buddha? In Buddhism we have a trinity, trikaya, which is also a unity, but the correspondence to the Christian trinity is difficult to make out. There is first, the Dharmakaya, 法身, Immutable Truth, represented by Dainichi Nyorai, 大日如來, Vairocana, the chief object of worship of the Shingon Sect. The Dai-butsu at Nara is his image. This corresponds to the Godhead. Second, the Sambhogakaya, 報身, represented by Amida Nyorai, 阿彌陀如來, glory in Heaven. This corresponds to the Father. Third, the Nirmanakaya, 應身, the apparitional body, represented by Shaka Nyorai, 釋迦如來. This corresponds to Christ the Son, but also to God walking in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the evening, and the "angels" of the Old Testament.

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1. This is Case XII of the *Hekiganroku*.

Taking the correspondence in reverse, The Father corresponds to No. 1, and No. 2, the Son to No. 3. The Holy Ghost has some similarity to No. 1. ("And when the Comforter is come he shall teach you all things") since in early Mahayana the Dharmakaya was the body of truth taught by Sakyamuni, his mind and spirit. In some ways, however, Buddhism is far closer to the emanations of Gnosticism than Christianity.

What the Buddha is, is the most difficult question man can ask. What is God? What is Truth? What is Life? What is the Universe?—these, all these together make up the monk's question. Tōzan's answer comes then as a kind of anticlimax, too absurd to be serious, and if it does not make you laugh when you hear it, you are in a bad way indeed, for as Blake said, "No man can see truth without believing it," and who can see truth without joy and laughter?

The 99th Case of the *Hekiganroku* is as follows. The Emperor Shukusō asked Chū, the National Teacher, "What is the Ten Aspect<sup>2</sup> Tamer<sup>3</sup>?" The National Teacher answered, "Danapati!<sup>4</sup> Go beyond Vairocana!"<sup>5</sup> The Emperor said, "Your humble servant does not understand." The National Teacher said, "Don't take yourself to be the Pure Body of Buddha!"

The Emperor understood that he was the Buddha, and was thinking of them as *two* identical things, not realising they are also two *identical* things, something beyond twoness and identity.

Going back to the original Case, we should note the lack of vagueness in the answer. It is not any amount of flax, but 3 lbs, no more, no less; not 3 lbs of anything, but 3 lbs of flax. The questioning monk knew, or

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2. The Ten Perfect Bodies of Buddha; that of complete enlightenment; the vow body; incarnate; still occupying his relics; ideal body; power body, full of mercy; appearing-at-will body; body of virtue; body of wisdom; and the Essence of all life.

3. Buddha tames human passion.

4. Donor, almsgiver.

5. The Godhead, the Essence.



thought he knew, that everything in the world was the Buddha. Like the Rich Young Ruler, only one thing was lacking,—this 3 lbs of flax. But it is not that this 3 lbs of flax also is the Buddha. It is the Dharmakaya and the Sambhogakaya and the Nirmanakaya with nothing omitted.

Some people say that Tōzan was himself weighing the flax or was watching or overheard someone else doing it. Or perhaps it just came into his mind fortuitously, something out of his childhood. It makes no difference. The Buddha is not Tōzan or the monk. He is not three pounds of flax. He is "Three pounds of flax." Expressed scientifically, the Buddha is " ", sometimes.

## THE COMMENTARY

洞山老人，參得些蚌蛤禪，纔開兩片，露出肝腸。然雖如是，且道向甚處見洞山。

Old Tōzan's Zen is rather like a clam; when it just opens the two halves of the shell, you can see the liver and the intestines. But though this may be so, just say, where can we see Tōzan?

After all, the real secrets are what everybody knows. As Confucius said, "To know that you know, and to know that you don't know,—that is the real wisdom." The wages of sin is death, but nobody knows it. All flesh is grass, but nobody knows it. God is love, but nobody knows it. Bach is the only musician ever born, but nobody knows it. "A little flower is the labour of ages," but nobody knows it. The Buddha is 3 lbs of flax, but nobody knows it.

Mumon asks, "Where can we see [the real] Tōzan?" This is a new question. What is the difference between the Buddha, alias 3 lbs of flax, and Tōzan? If it is the real Tōzan and the Buddha, the answer is, none. So

the question resolves itself into, what is the difference between Tōzan and the real Tōzan? We see now that Tōzan's answer to the monk was wrong, or rather, incomplete. He should have said, "Three pounds of flax," and, "Any number except three, and not pounds (ounces or tons will do) and under no circumstances flax!" That is what the Buddha really is, and it is what Tōzan is.

## THE VERSE

突出麻三斤	言親意更親
來說是非者	便是是非人

"Three pounds of flax,"—artlessly, spontaneously it comes out.

The words and the meaning are intimate, indivisibly so.

He who explains this and that, yes and no, the relative,

Is himself [only] a relative man.

The second line shows how important words are, how impossible it is to divide, as Keats said, Truth and Beauty. But the "only" inserted in the last line reminds us not to despise relativity. Without time there is no timeless. Without the 3 lbs of flax there is no Buddha.

The relative speaks of the relative. The divine speaks of the divine. Tōzan spoke of the absolute, using the words of the relative. Most people use the words of the absolute, that is, God, immortality, eternity, infinity, but their voice is the voice of the relative. Everything depends upon the voice, the intonation, the inverted commas.

## Case XIX

### NANSEN'S ORDINARY MIND

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Both Jōshū and Nansen his master are described in Volume III of this series.

#### THE CASE

南泉因趙州問，如何是道。泉云，平常心是道。州云，還可趣向否。泉云，擬向即乖。州云，不擬，爭知是道。泉云，道不屬知，不屬不知。知是妄覺，不知是無記。若真達不疑之道，猶如太虛，廓然洞豁。豈可強是非也。州於言下頓悟。

Jōshū asked Nansen, "What is the Way?" Nansen answered, "Your ordinary mind,—that is the Way." Jōshū said, "Does it go in any particular direction?"<sup>1</sup> Nansen replied, "The more you seek after it, the more it runs away." Jōshū: "Then how can you know it is the Way?" Nansen: "The Way does not belong to knowing or not knowing. Knowing is illusion. Not knowing is lack of discrimination. When you get to this unperplexed Way, it is like the vastness of space, an unfathomable void, so how can it be this or that, yes or no?" Upon this Jōshū came to a sudden realisation.

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1. Or, more in accord with Nansen's reply, "How can we get onto it?"

The word Way, with its suggestion of both permanence and movement is somewhat akin to the Logos, the (verbal) activity of God.

The Way (Tao) of Laotse is defined by Waley as "the way the universe works," but this sounds rather objective and mechanical. For Laotse the Way is nameless (I, 1; XXXII, 1), or shall we parody Kierkegaard and say, the Way is namelessness. It contains everything (IV, 1) is not morality (V, 1; XVIII, 1) is like water (VIII, 1) implies Nirvana (XVI, 1). The way is things as they are (XXV, end) is not vagueness and absoluteness (XXIX, end) is free like a drifting boat (XXXIV, 1).

As for Confucius, one thinks immediately of the greatest of his sayings, perhaps the greatest of all sayings:

If a man hear the Way in the morning, he may die without regret in the evening.

Chinese commentators explain this 道 as the Principle of Right in affairs and things, 事物當然之理, which in removing all the poetry has deprived it of more than half its meaning. In the same chapter IV, 15, Confucius says, to the most famous of his disciples, Sōshin, "The Way I teach is a unity that runs through all things." Sō said, "Yes!" Confucius went out, and the disciples asked, "What did he mean?" Sō said, "The Way of the Master is simply being true to our nature and acting in accordance with this towards others,—that is all." A remark very close to Zen is in the *Analects*, VI, 15:

Who can go out save by the door. Why do not people walk in the Way?

This means that the Way is the way. Stevenson says, "Straight are the ways of life like the grooves of launching." Another remarkable saying by Confucius:

A man can enlarge the Way; the Way cannot enlarge a man.

This reminds us of Keats:

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever;  
Its loveliness increases.

And Shelley on Keats himself:

the loveliness  
Which he made yet more lovely.

The Way for Confucius is equivalent to Virtue, but that he did not use the word virtue in the ordinary relative sense is shown by his saying:

Your good men of the villages are the thieves of virtue. XVII, 13.

Another poetical passage in the *Doctrine of the Mean* XII, 4:

The Way of the True Man has its beginnings in ordinary unlearned men and women; at its highest it shines throughout Heaven and Earth.

In the next sentence Confucius comes still closer to Zen and to the present Case:

The Master said, "The Way is not far from us."

Mencius follows him, IV, i 1:

The Way is close at hand, but men seek it afar.

Mencius, 372-289 B.C., died more than a thousand years before Nansen was born, and here we see how Chinese Zen is, or shall we say how Zennish the Chinese are, or were.

One of the most famous explanations of "Your every day mind" is, "When there is tea, to drink it; when there is rice, to eat it," 茶に逢うては茶を喫し、飯に逢うては飯を喫す, given by Keizan-Jōkin, of the Japanese Sōtō

Branch, the founder of Sōjiji Temple, when he attained enlightenment through this very sentence. In art and poetry and music the very greatest things are marked by a supreme familiarity, an extraordinary ordinariness, an unthinkable-otherwiseness:

The owl for all his feathers was a cold.

"A particular direction." This may mean "Where does the Way go to?" or, "How can we get on it?" Later, Nansen says the Way is like the vastness of space, not wide or narrow, running this way or that way, not going from ignorance to enlightenment, not even any progress, always walking, but really always in the same places; always falling, but always in the Garden of Eden. As for getting on it, neither asceticism, nor study, neither works nor faith, nothing can separate us from the "love" of God. But there is a difference also, between the two classes of beings on the Way, those who are conscious of it, and those who are not. So with music. Those who really know what music is (and music means Bach) know that every sound, however crude or vulgar, is the Voice of God, just like the Art of Fugue, but those who don't really know what music is don't know even that they don't know. So all are on the Way, but only some few know it.

Jōshū asks how you can tell whether it is the Way or not, how you know that Wordsworth is good and Coleridge no good. Nansen answers with genius. He does not say it is a matter of experience; he says it is not a matter of knowing or not knowing. Knowing means knowing that this is true and that is untrue, this is good, that is bad, this is the Way, that is not the Way. Not knowing implies stupidity, death, nothingness. So when Nansen asserts that the Way is not a matter of knowing or not knowing, this statement also, being a statement of knowing, is, strictly speaking, improper, and Nansen would be the first to admit it.

In Christianity the idea of the Way is not so

prevalent as in the Far East. Its concreteness and unphilosophical implications were less acceptable than Godhead, Reason, Principle, Absolute, Ultimate, and so on. In the New Testament, there is one striking passage:

I am the Way.

This is something that even Ummon never thought of saying. It is as transcendental as "God is love" in which also the personal and the impersonal are equalled. Poetry, that is, religion, means taking words literally, not metaphorically. "God is Love" is explained away as meaning that God is loving, a very doubtful proposition. According to Cruden's *Concordance*;

Jesus Christ is called the way, *John XIV, 6*, because it is by him alone that believers obtain eternal life, and an entrance into heaven. He is the way to heaven, by the doctrine which he taught; by death, by which he purchased this heavenly inheritance for the elect; by his holy life and conversation, setting up an example, that we should follow his steps; and by the influence of his Spirit, whereby believers are sanctified, and made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

If we interpret "I am the Way" from the Zen point of view we would say that it means that an enlightened man, or rather, any man at a moment of enlightenment, is the Way, is not a person, yet not a principle; is a movement, but not an improvement; is universal, in that he acts for all creatures, but is particular, in that he acts in a place and at a time; is an example, but not an example of something else. This is "the Way of the righteous." Also in the Old Testament we have "the way of the Lord." What way does God walk on? Clearly, He is himself the Way; He walks on Himself. Buddhistically speaking, a man with the Buddha nature walks the Buddha way. He and the Way are two aspects of one thing. This One Thing is one aspect of

two things. Romans XI, 33, however, says that "His ways are past finding out." This we would interpret as meaning, first, that the Way is intellectually un-point-at-able. Second, that though we are always more or less "off," though we (seem to) get gradually on-ner.

## THE COMMENTARY

南泉被趙州發問，直得瓦解冰消，分疎不下。趙州縱饒悟去，更參三十年始得。

Jōshū suddenly brought up the question to Nansen, who explained it, but the tile disintegrating, the ice dissolving, the drain is blocked up. Even though Jōshū has come to a realisation, he must delve into it for another thirty years before he can understand it fully.

Commentators<sup>2</sup> all differ, but taking into consideration the second sentence, the first seems to mean that Nansen explained everything, but Jōshū was unable at that time fully to comprehend the meaning. There are many cases where the theory of the "once for all satori" does not apply; and anyway the "ladder satori" idea is more reasonable or shall we say more attractive, otherwise, as the early Indian Buddhists perceived, suicide would be the next logical step after enlightenment. Their reason of course was to prevent future transmigration which would result from any retrogression, but to have won the (only) race and have a crown laid up for us in Heaven is the condition of animals. There are many cases on record where the

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2. Jimbo takes 不下 as "able to pass through", thus praising Nansen, Inoue as praising Nansen but speaking scornfully of Jōshū, whose drain is blocked up. Sakada blames both, since all dialogue is useless.



first enlightenment was felt to be incomplete, for example that of Enō, on hearing the Diamond Sutra being recited. Examples will be found in *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, the Kōan Exercise.

## THE VERSE

春有百花秋有月	夏有涼風冬有雪
若無閑事挂心頭	便是人間好時節

The spring flowers, the moon in autumn,  
The cool wind of summer, winter's snow,—  
If your mind is not clouded with unnecessary  
things,  
This is the happy day in human life.

This verse is a little less unpoetical than most, but does not sound very original. However, it is not an imitation of Stevenson:

The world is so full of a number of things  
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

In any case, Mumon's verse is somewhat egotistical, and I would like to temper it with the last line of another of Stevenson's *The Whole Duty of Children*:

At least as far as he is able.

Only those who really love the flowers and the winds and the moon and the snow know how necessary it is to enjoy them with another person. And this is "the ordinary mind" which Mumon is trying to exemplify. Zen sometimes falls into quietism and misanthropy.

## Case XX

### SHŌGEN'S STRONG MAN



Shōgen is the latest of the persons included in the *Mumonkan*, being in fact a contemporary of Mumon himself, and it is through him that the present (Japanese) Rinzai school traces its descent.

Shōgen (Sungyuan) was born in 1132, and died in 1202. Mumon was born 1183, when Shōgen was fifty two, and when Shōgen died, Mumon was twenty. Shōgen became a monk proper late in life, in 1164, when he was thirty two. He visited all the great men of the time, especially Daie. He was enlightened on hearing his master Mittan shout at a monk who was interviewing him, "It is not the mind, it is not the Buddha, it is not a thing!" the words of Nansen which come in Case XXVII.

### THE CASE

松源和尚云，大力量人，因甚擡脚不起。又云，開口不在舌頭上。

Shōgen said, "Why is it that a man of great

strength cannot lift up his own legs?" [Or, "Why does an enlightened man not stand up for Zen?"] And again, "It is not with our tongue that we speak."

Shōgen proposes in this Case two problems and Mumon has omitted a third, which was: 明眼人因甚麼脚下紅絲線不斷, "Why does not the man of enlightened mind cut away the entanglements round his feet?" The solution to the problem why Mumon omitted the third question depends upon the interpretation of the first question.

Taking the first translation, Shōgen asks, "Why can't a man lift himself up?" The Christian and the Nem-butsum answer would be that only Christ or Amida can do this. Then, "Why can't a man speak with his tongue?" to which neither Christianity nor Jōdoshū could give an answer. The same applies to the third question, which asks why an enlightened man is not enlightened. The similarity of the second and the third statements is probably the reason why Mumon omitted the third.

Taking the first statement in the second translation, Shōgen is attacking the quietistic tendency of Zen, its unsocial, unmissionary attitude. It is easy to say that my profit is your profit, my enlightenment means your enlightenment, or to ask "How can I save you if I don't save myself first?" However, when we remember that Zen is not the simple equation of you and me, and that we learn (only) by teaching, we can see that the danger of self-saving and egotism in Zen is not less great than in Christianity, which makes as its (ostensible) object the saving of one's own soul.

"We do not speak (preach) with our tongues" may also be taken to mean that it is the whole body-soul that speaks, well or badly, for no thing is ever silent. "Why does an enlightened man not get rid of his emotional and intellectual entanglements?" The answer is

he can't, and he doesn't want to. He does not distinguish *satori* and *mayoi*, he does not wish to avoid Hell, or go to Heaven.

## THE COMMENTARY

松源可謂傾腸倒腹。只是缺人承當。縱饒直下承當，正好來無門處喫痛棒。何故聲。要識真金火裏看。

It must be said that Shōgen shows us his whole soul, but there is no one to receive it. If there should be anyone who actually can do so, let him come to me, Mumon, and be beaten with many blows. Why these blows? If it is wished to know true gold, see it in the midst of the fire.

This Commentary is rather feeble. To distinguish the merely talking Zen from the true, beating may be one method, but this is not the object of the Zen master's beating any more than it is that of the universe. "Let Nature be your teacher." Yes, but Nature teaches because she has no intention to teach, "has no designs upon us". Being taught is in the "letting". In the same way, if you beat your little boy in cold blood, upon the calculated supposition that he will thereby be improved in character, you will produce a liar and a hypocrite and a self-deceiver, if nothing worse. If you give him a good smart smack because,—well, because you do, he will receive it for what it is a painful evidence of your interest in him and his doings. So with master and disciple. The master strikes, not because he loves or hates (though he does), not to teach or deter, but because he does so, as a partaker of the Nature of Things in which you are to share also. As Laotse says, "Heaven and Earth are ruthless," 天地不仁。

## THE VERSE

擡腳踏翻香水海	低頭俯視四禪天
一箇渾身無處著	請續一句

Raising my foot I kick up the Scented Ocean;  
 Lowering my head I look down on the Four  
 Dhyana Heavens.  
 My body is so big there's nowhere to put it;  
 Please finish this verse yourself!

The Scented Ocean surrounds Mount Sumeru, in the centre of the universe. The Four Dhyana Heavens are the regions inhabited by those who attain to these four states, the first of which is as large as one whole universe. Mumon means that we can rise superior to all the heavens and universes imagined in the Buddhist cosmology. Hyperbole is the air it breathes. Infinite in extent and infinite in its details, the Chinese used it, as did Chuangtse, to bring out the relativity of all qualities, and to magnify the power of man. Shōgen asks why a man of great strength cannot lift his feet. Mumon says he can kick up water of the Celestial Ocean with his foot, and look down from a height upon the Heaven of Heavens. It is another version of Emerson's "Men descend to meet."

The description of the body of such an enlightened man reminds us of the that of Lear's bird; the bush is the universe:

There was an old man who said "Hush!  
 I perceive a young bird in this bush."  
 When they asked, "Is it small?"  
 He replied, "Not at all!  
 It is four times as big as the bush!"

And note that it is a "young" bird. Who is the "Old Man?"

## Case XXI

### UMMON'S SHIT-STICK

#### *Dramatis Personae*

This is my favourite Case, as Ummon is my favourite Master. We have three "persons" here, Ummon, the shit-stick, and the Buddha, and difficult indeed it is to distinguish between them. Ummon was born in 966; the shit-stick with humanity; and the Buddha with the universe.

#### THE CASE

雲門因僧問，如何是佛，門云，乾屎橛。

A monk asked Ummon, "What is the Buddha?"  
"It is a shit-wiping stick," replied Ummon.

Instead of toilet paper the Chinese of this time used a piece of stick to wipe themselves after excretion. This one is a used, useless, thrown-away, dried one. This shit-stick must have been employed as a term of abuse by the common people, and no doubt such expressions could be found in other languages. Rinzai uses it of a monk who is unable to express himself<sup>1</sup>. But to use it to define the Infinite, to limit the Illimitable, to equate the most worthy of things with the least, to make vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour indistinguishable, and yet not fall into indifferentism, and cynicism, to be willing to die for the lowest form of

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1. See page 110.

toilet-paper,—this is indeed *debellare superbos, parcere victis*, in a sense that should have shocked Virgil also. To debunk the highbrow and elevate the lowbrow and bring everything into an odious middle-brow state is indeed far from Ummon's intention, but it is not altogether unconnected with it. Ummon is not teaching pantheism, nor is he even showing that all things in the world have an equal because infinite value, though to grasp this is to be more than half-way to Zen. Ummon wants us to see that this shit-stick is the whole universe, is God, is the Godhead, is Buddha. Thus it is all a question of emphasis; not, "This shit-stick is the BUDDHA!" but "THIS SHIT-STICK is the Buddha." The physical is more urgent, more lively, more explosive than the equally necessary spiritual.

There are other aspects of this scatological Case. In India there were various meditations on unclean things, for example, Navasamjña 九想觀, meditation on a corpse, to control sexual desire. The nine are, its tumefaction, mottled blue colour, putrefaction, bloody messiness, rotten flesh, being eaten by birds and animals, gradual dismemberment, bones, and its burning and burial. Machimoto Donku, describing this *kanshiketsu* says:

It is an instrument for removing excretion. Among the lower classes in the recesses of the mountainous districts of China, large lavatories have a shit-pole on one side. Having excreted, one straddles over the pole and walks four or five steps, rubbing the posterior along it. Thus this pole is always covered with dried excretion. This is what is called here a "dried shit-pole". In Japan, among the mountains of Kiso we can find a short stick, called a dung-stick. It is made in two ways, the superior looking like a lacquered spatula. Well-off people use this kind.

This was written in the forty second year of Meiji.

In his *Mumonkan* Jimbo tells an interesting story. He says:

When I was an *unsui* of sixteen or seventeen, I lost my way among the mountains of Hida, and stayed the night at a solitary cottage there. I got into trouble over the spatula. Not knowing how to use it, I rummaged about for some bits of paper, and at last finished my business. When I asked the man of the house what that thing was, he answered "Hotokegi (ほとけぎ)", meaning Buddha-stick. "That's a sacrilegious sort of name, isn't it," I said, He retorted, "You use paper; isn't that a still worse thing, to treat paper so?"

In China, it should be noted paper, especially printed paper, was always held in the highest respect, and certain monks used to go about picking up scraps of paper, and reverently burning them. Also, in Japan, *Kami* means both paper, and god.

There is a *senryū* in the Seventeenth Volume of *Yanagidaru*, 1782:

へらがあるのにのべ紙で石田拭き

There was a spatula there,

But all the same Ishida wiped himself  
With a paper handkerchief.

Ishida Mitsunari, who entered the service of Hideyoshi at the age of thirteen, supported Hideyori against Ieyasu. Defeated at Sekigahara, 1600, he was captured at the village of Iguchi, according to common report because he used paper in the lavatory.

All excretions of the body are considered unclean (there is a Hell of Excrement, 屎糞地獄) no doubt because of the connection with sex and the feeling of shame arising from the necessity of primitive man avoiding attack by having sexual relations in a dark, safe place. As a result we "naturally" feel that a shit-stick is a filthy thing, to be driven out of our consciousness, and of course having no relation to the problems of life or the notion of Buddha. You may say, "That may be so, but why not look for the Buddha



in some more pleasant, gracious region? Why use the most difficult example?"

One answer is that if you are not at home everywhere, you are at home nowhere. (An Englishman's house is his castle, but a castle is not a home). Another answer is that, as Hamlet says, one fault, one lack ruins us in spite of all the rest of our virtues. "One thing thou lackest!"

## THE COMMENTARY

雲門可謂家貧難辦素食，事忙不及草書。動便將屎橛來，撐門拄戶。佛法興衰可見。

We must say that Ummon can't appreciate plain food. He's so busy he can't even scribble properly. He is disposed to support the sect with a shit-stick. Look at the outcome!

The first two sentences mean that Ummon is careless about what he is saying because of a poverty of thought and an excessive number of disciples. The second two mean that Buddhism can be supported with money or poverty, with romanticism or bare truth, with a golden septre or a shit-stick. Its rise or fall depends on which we choose. Build a great temple,

With storied windows richly dight  
Casting a dim religious light,

form a World Buddhist Federation, have ceremonies and incense and robes and sepulchral voices and much-advertised zazen meetings,—and Zen will continue—or not! Speak ill of Zen, never attend sesshin, look askance at temples, despise the Masters,—and Zen will....

## THE VERSE

閃	電	光	擊	石	火
眨	得	眼	已	蹉	過

Sudden flashes of lightning!  
 Sparks from iron striking flint!  
 A blink of the mind's eye,  
 And the legs are already walking in different  
 directions.

Ummon's shit-stick is compared to a flash of lightning and sparks in its spontaneity, thoughtlessness, wordlessness, unemotionality, lack of beauty, formlessness. In this the laconic shit-stick and the flash and the spark are like the Godhead. If the eye just for a moment becomes emotional or intellectual and feels the shit-stick repulsive, or thinks it to be unworthy of serious attention, the Buddha is lost.

## Case XXII

### KASHŌ'S FLAG-POLE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Kasyapa has already appeared in Case VI. There is a late tradition that a council was called after Buddha's death to settle matters of doctrine. Kasyapa, the most learned of the disciples, was asked to recite the metaphysical views; Upali, the oldest living disciple, the laws and discipline; and Ananda, Buddha's favourite disciple, the parables and sermons. According to Buddhist "history" there was a good deal of trouble about Ananda's entrance to the Synod. He attained Arhathood on the eve of the session, but even so he was charged with (i) Not being able to formulate the lesser and minor precepts, as he was overwhelmed with grief at the imminent death of Buddha. (ii) He had to tread on the clothes of Buddha while sewing them. (iii) He allowed women to salute the body of Buddha first, and so on, and so on. He proved his innocence in all these matters, which belong to primitive Buddhism, and have not the slightest connection with Zen.

#### THE CASE

迦葉因阿難問云，世尊傳金襴袈裟外，別傳何物，葉喚云，阿難。難應諾。葉云，倒却門前利竿著。

Anan asked Kashō, "The World-honoured One transmitted to you the surplice of golden cloth; did he transmit anything else to you? Kashō

called him and said, "Anan!" "Yes?" said Anan. "Knock down the flagpole at the gate" said Kashō.

The point, as so often in such episodes, is the calling of Ananda by Kasyapa. It reminds us of Christ's calling of some of the disciples. The Master calls, the other rises up and follows him. The flag-pole was one set up at a temple gate, to show, by the raising of a flag, that preaching was going on, a silent offer of instruction by an accredited teacher. Ananda feels that there is something to receive from Buddha other than the outward signs, and asks what it is. Kasyapa tells him by calling to him, and Ananda receives it in the word "Yes?" It is like love (or hate) at first sight. All the reasons for it can be given, but only the lover feels the irresistibility, the inevitability of the attraction. Zen is (suddenly) falling in love with the universe, with fate, with God, with Nature.

At every moment of the day we are being called, and we answer. Things examine us; we fail; they examine us, we fail. We fail, not from a lack of knowledge, or even from a lack of will, but from what Shakespeare calls "readiness," the quality which a mirror has par excellence. There is a similar readiness felt at the end of *The Pulley*:

Me thought I heard one calling, 'Childe';  
And I reply'd, 'My Lord.'

The answering of the question in this particular case is not a matter of effect and cause. It is like the hibernation of the snake and the warmth of spring. Unless the snake sleeps, the winter will be eternal; until Kasyapa calls, Ananda will never answer. "Push over the flag-staff!" is the destructive side of Zen, illustrated in Stevenson's Fable of *The Fireman*.

There was once a sick man in a burning house, to whom there entered a fireman.

"Do not save me," said the sick man. "Save those who are strong."

"Will you kindly tell me why?" inquired the fireman, for he was a civil fellow.

"Nothing could possibly be fairer," said the sick man. "The strong should be preferred in all cases, because they are of more service in the world."

The fireman pondered a while, for he was a man of some philosophy. "Granted," said he at last, as a part of the roof fell in; "but for the sake of conversation, what would you lay down as the proper service of the strong?"

"Nothing can possibly be easier," returned the sick man; "the proper service of the strong is to help to the weak."

Again the fireman reflected, for there was nothing hasty about this excellent creature. "I could forgive you being sick," he said at last, as a portion of the wall fell out, "but I cannot bear your being such a fool." And with that he heaved up his fireman's axe, for he was eminently just, and clove the sick man to the bed.

This Case, by the way, is a continuation of Case VI where Buddha hands over the Law to Kasyapa. Its final sequel is the violent scene of Case XXIII.

## THE COMMENTARY

若向者裏下得一轉語親切，便見靈山一會，儼然未散。其或未然，昆婆尸佛早留心，直至而今不得妙。

If you can give a "turning-word" in regard to all this, you will see the meeting at Mount Grdhrakuta still in session. If not, then however much you "struggle towards the light"<sup>1</sup> from the age of Vipasyin, you cannot even now gain the Essence.

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1. Matthew Arnold.

"A turning-word" is an expression which comes in Case II and Case XI. "The Meeting at Mountain Grdhrakuta still undissolved" is borrowed from Tendai Daishi, (also known as Chisha, 智者, and as Chigi, 智額) born about 538, and died in 597. He studied under Eshi (Huiszu), and found in the Lotus Sutra the best interpretation of Buddhism. In 575 he went to Mount Tendai where he founded the Kegon School. Tendai wrote: "If you have the enlightenment of the Dharma-flower samadhi<sup>2</sup>, if you have made the Revolving Dharani<sup>3</sup> your own, then [for you] the assembly still sits in all its majesty upon the Sacred [Vulture] Mountain."

Vipasyin is the first of the Seven Buddhas, the others being, if I can spell their names properly, Sikhin, Visvabhu, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kasyapa<sup>4</sup> and Sakyamuni. Vipasyin comes also in Case II.

Mumon emphasises the suddenness of Ananda's realisation in contrast with the ages we may spend when we are looking for truth in the wrong place.

## THE VERSE

問處何如答處親  
兄呼弟應揚家醜

幾人於此眼生筋  
不屬陰陽別是春

The question,—how dull! The answer,—how intimate!

How many people there are with a film over

2. The samadhi which sees into the three dogmas of unreality: dependent reality, and transcendence, 空, 假, 中, the noumenal, the phenomenal, and the absolute which unites them.

3. 旋陀羅尼, A spell which endows with extensive powers of evolution.

4. No connection with the Kasyapa of the present Case.

their eyes!

The elder brother calling, the younger brother  
answering,—the family skeleton!

This is a spring that does not belong to Yin  
and Yang.

The question as to something to be conveyed other than a golden thread is a foolish, un-zen-like question, but the answer, "Ananda!" is speaking to Ananda's condition. Spiritual ophthalmia is caused by this idea of "something," Something, Somebody, a Presence, which or whom we can somehow, some day meet, the Pilot face to face with us. But every thing is that Something; every person is that Somebody, every moment is eternity, every place is holy ground.

The "family skeleton," which is literally "the ugliness of the house," means the Zen that Kasyapa and Ananda have revealed in their conversation. It also means, in reverse, they are casting their pearls before swine, we being the swine. As for the last line, we are reminded of Bashō's verse:

人も見ぬ春や鏡のうらの梅

A spring unseen of men,—  
The flowering plum tree  
On the back of this mirror.

This is the spring of art, that comes also in *The Grecian Urn*, with the happy boughs

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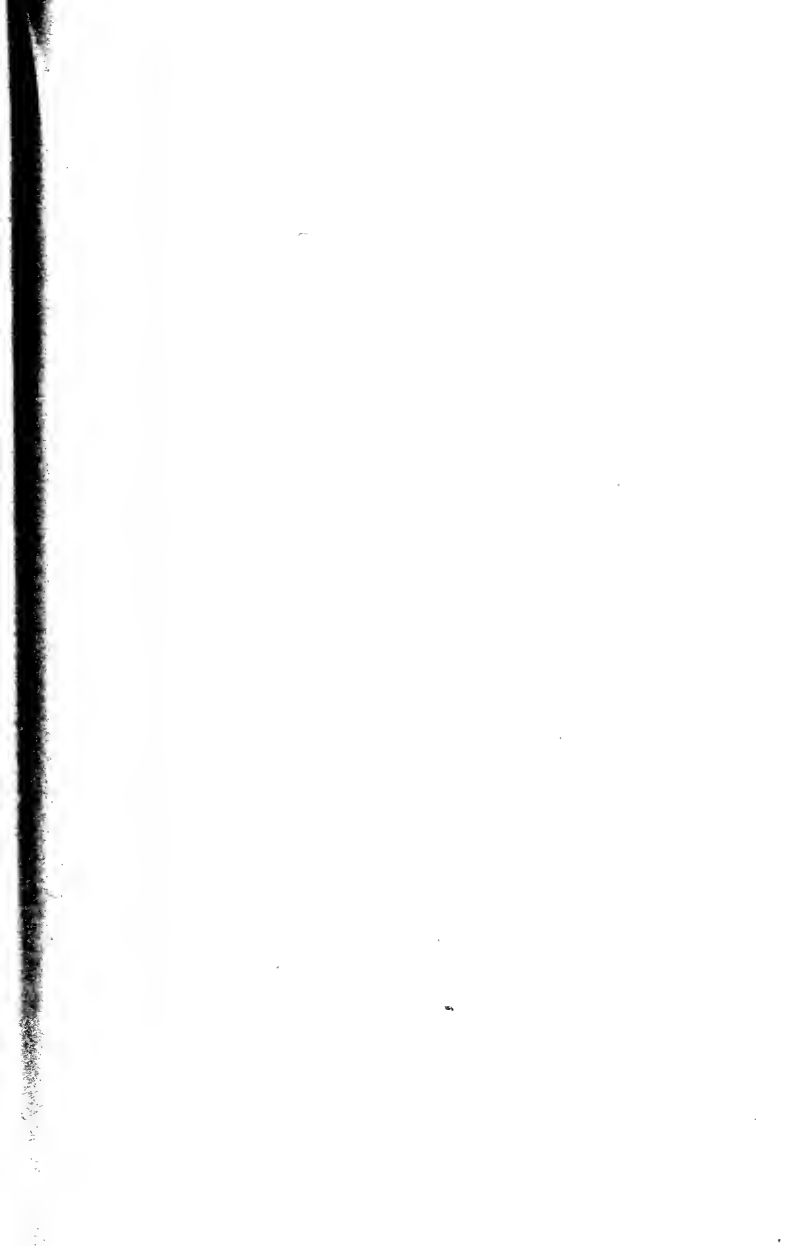
that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu.

This spring is also beyond the Yin and the Yang, the feminine and masculine, the negative and positive elements of the universe, beyond relativity. But this, of Keats, in being "All breathing human passion far

above," is not Zen. It is a poetical escapism which we find even in Blake:

Father, O father ! what do we here  
In this land of unbelief and fear?  
The Land of Dreams is better far,  
Above the light of the morning star.





CASE XXIII  
Enō Trimming Bam-  
boos, by Liangpai,  
c. 1210

This is the Sixth  
Patriarch before he  
became so.



## Case XXIII

### ENŌ'S GOOD-AND-EVIL

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Enō is the third most famous personage in the history of Zen, if we include Buddha, the other being Daruma. Daruma has something ghostly and unreal about him, and the other four Patriarchs seem somehow uncertain and hesitating. It is with Enō that Zen was really born for ever. In him we see the ordinary Chinese at his best. There seems to be no reason, with Dr. Suzuki, himself a scholar, to suppose that Enō's lack of education and lack of knowledge is exaggerated. Apparently he could not read or write to the end of his life. His acquaintance with many sutras is no evidence of his learning, for when the sutras are recited in Chinese the meaning can be more or less understood. This is indeed how Enō first became enlightened outside his customer's house. This would not be possible in Japan, for the Japanese reading is unintelligible.

In Enō we seem to understand the meaning of the saying that an ordinary man is the Buddha. He has little of that love of paradox for its own sake which has often disfigured Zen; no shouting or beating; no attempt, as with Ummon, to pack the whole meaning of existence into a single syllable. He is able (therefore) to stand up (or sit down) and address a crowd of people, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, and say in simple, modest language what Zen is, what it is not. Kindness, simplicity, honesty, directness, politeness,—this is what Enō has. He lacks poetry.

Of Emyō (Huiming) we are told in the *Rokusodan-gyō*:

One monk, whose secular name was Chin, named Emyō, was the foremost of those [pursuing me]. He was a general of the fourth rank [as a layman]. In character and action he was very rough and outspoken, and most assiduous in pursuit.

He is called, *jōza*, 上座, used also of Jinshū, meaning an enlightened monk still in the monastery along with the others.

## THE CASE

六祖因明上座趁至大庾嶺，祖見明至，即擲衣鉢於石上云，此衣表信，可力爭耶。任君將去。明遂舉之，如山不動，踟躕悚慄。明曰，我來求法，非爲衣也。願行者開示。祖云，不思善不思惡，正與麼時，那箇是明上座本來面目。明當下大悟，遍體汗流，泣淚作禮問曰，上來密語密意外，還更有意旨否。祖曰，我今爲汝說者，即非密也。汝若返照自己面目，密却在汝邊。明云，某甲雖在黃梅隨衆，實未省自己面目。今蒙指授入處，如人飲水，冷暖自知。今行者即是某甲師也。祖云，汝若如是，則吾與汝同師黃梅。善自護持。

The 6th Patriarch was pursued by Monk Myō up to Daiyurei. The Patriarch, seeing Myō coming, laid the robe and the bowl on a rock, and said to him: "This robe represents the faith; is it to be fought for? I allow you to take them away." Myō tried to lift them up, but they were as heavy as a mountain; they would not budge. Hesitating and trembling, he said, "I came for the Doctrine, not for the robe. I beg you to teach your servant!" The Patriarch said, "Do not think, 'This is good!' This is bad!" At such a moment, what is the Original Self of Monk Myō?" At this, Myō was all at once greatly enlightened; his whole body was covered with sweat. With tears flowing

he made obeisance, and asked, "Beside the secret words and the secret meaning is there anything else, deeper still?" The Patriarch answered, "You have realised your True Self, and anything deeper belongs to you alone." Myō said, "When I was at Ōbai<sup>1</sup> together with the other monks, I never realised what my true self was. Now I have received from you instruction. It is like a man drinking water himself, and knowing whether it is cold or warm. You are my master!" The Patriarch said, "We both have Ōbai for our teacher. Hold fast to what you have learned from him!"

That Emyō could not lift up the robe is quite believable, not only because of the six or seven hundred miles he had travelled from Ōbai to Daiyurei, but because, just as by faith we can move mountains, so without faith we cannot pick up a pin.

The present Case is not taken from the *Rokusodangyō*, which gives more details, and tells us:

Enō said to Emyō, "Allow no thought to arise in your mind, 勿生一念, and I will preach to you." After Emyō had done zazen for a long time, Enō said, "Think not, etc."

*Honrai no memmoku* is translated by Suzuki as, "Your original face before you were born." This, though not literal, gives us a shock. It corresponds to Christ's "Ye must be born again!"

"Think not of good or bad," includes profit and loss, pleasant and unpleasant, mine and his. The difficult word is "think," which means as often in Wordsworth, feel, or intuit. "Think not" really means, therefore, think, realise, make real, by your will, (that there is no such thing as good and bad, and so on). Enō's

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1. Mount Ōbai, where the 5th Patriarch Gunin had his monastery of seven hundred monks.

answer to Emyō's asking for more, like Oliver Twist, is worthy of note. He says in effect, "There is nothing to reveal. There is no secret to convey. What I said to you I say to all." And lastly Enō, with his strong Chinese sense of decorum and propriety, reminds Emyō that whatever may be Emyō's private opinion of the relative merits of Gunin and himself, he, Enō, is his disciple, and Emyō also.

## THE COMMENTARY

六祖可謂，是事出急家。老婆心切，譬如新荔枝，剝了殼去了核，  
送在你口裏，只要你嚥一嚥。

The Sixth Patriarch should say that this is a state of emergency, needing grandmotherly kindness. It is like peeling a fresh lichi<sup>2</sup>, removing the pips, and then putting it in your mouth for you. All you have to do is just to gulp it down.

Mumon, with his customary sharpness, points out the unusual gentleness, gentlemanliness, and kindness of Enō to Emyō, and how his warmth of feeling tells him the right thing to say in order to call out Emyō's latent Buddhahood. Mere cleverness could not do this, because *it is kindness that gives us the facts*:

And you must love him ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

## THE VERSE

描不成兮畫不就	贊不及兮休生受
本來面目沒處藏	世界壞時渠不朽

You describe it in vain, you picture it unavail-  
ingly;

2. A kind of fruit.

Praising it is useless; stop trying to apperceive it!

There is nowhere to hide your true self;  
When the universe is annihilated, this remains,  
indestructible.

The first two lines and the second two are in contrast. The real self can be kissed, not caught; is invisible, but cannot be hidden. It is unborn, but cannot die.

"Stop trying to apperceive it," 休生受, is explained in a variety of ways.

1. Of the Twelve Nidanas, 十二因緣, the 12 links of the chain of existence, No. 7 is sensation, 受, and No. 11 is birth, 生. These two are perhaps put for all the twelve. In that case Mumon means, "Break the chain of existence!"
2. "Receiving life" means from one's parents, being born. Mumon means, "Stop receiving life," that is, "Unless a seed fall to the ground and die..."
3. Taking 生 as arouse, we get the same meaning as Enō's "Allow no thought to arise in your mind," because It cannot be thought of.

Eternity is but a thought  
By which we think of Thee.

In making It, or Thee, an object of thought we instantly lose it. But we cannot find it, we cannot hide it or lose it. Confucius said:

My friends, do you think I have concealed anything from you? I have concealed nothing.

The last line is interesting. Mumon seems to be asserting the immortality of the soul, but only seems. In Case XXIX of the *Hekiganroku* we have the opposite opinion, apparently.

A monk asked Daizui<sup>3</sup>, "When the Age of Fire<sup>4</sup> comes, all things will be utterly destroyed. Will This, [Reality, our real self, the Buddha nature] also be destroyed, or not?" Daizui said, "It will be destroyed." The monk persisted, "You mean that it will be destroyed along with everything else?" Daizui said, "It will be destroyed along with everything else."

The "This" of the above Case is generally taken as meaning the soul, and Daizui is denying its immortality. Mumon asserts it. Daizui and Mumon are saying the same thing, but speaking about different things. Daizui says that all things in time begin in time and end in time. Mumon says that all things beyond time are indestructible.

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3. The spiritual son of Chōkei, grandson of Hyakujō. He lived a remarkably austere life.

4. The fire in the kalpa of destruction.



## Case XXIV

### FUKETSU'S SPEECH AND SILENCE

Rinzai  
↓  
Kōke  
↓  
Nanyin  
↓  
Fuketsu

#### *Dramatis Personae*

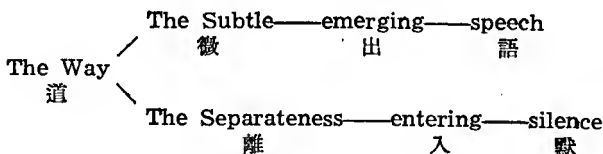
Fuketsu (Fenghsueh), 896-973, was Rinzai's great-grandson in the faith. He was born the year before Jōshū died, in 896, and when young studied the Confucian Classics, but, failing in his examination for office, turned to Buddhism, at first the Tendai Sect, then Zen. At the age of twenty five he studied under Kyōsei, Seppō's disciple, but made no headway, and went round to several other masters of Zen. The account of Fuketsu's enlightenment is given in the very long Commentary of Case XXXVIII of the *Hekiganroku*. It is unusual in that the climax was brought about by Nan-in's praising Fuketsu.

#### THE CASE

風穴和尚因僧問，語默涉離微，如何通不犯，穴云，  
長憶江南三月裏，鷓鴣啼處百花香。

A monk asked Fuketsu, "Both speech and silence transgress; how can we not do so?" Fuketsu said, "I often think of Kōnan in march;  
The partridge chirps among the scented flowers."

Sōjō (Sengchao), a monk of the 4th century, was one of the four great translators of the Buddhist scriptures under Kumarajiva, who died about 412, more than a hundred years before Daruma came to China. Condemned to death at the age of thirty one, he asked for a week's reprieve, during which he wrote the *Hōzōron*, 寶藏論. It consists of three parts, the second being *Rimitaijōbon* 離微體淨品. In this we are told that the Great Way of the Universe, when it separates, 離, itself from all the names and forms it assumes, and enters into the Bhutatathata, the Absolute Immutable Reality, 眞如, which also equals the Buddha nature, 佛性, or the Dharmakaya, 法身, or 理 Noumena, is called Separateness, 離. When the Great Way, according to circumstance, manifests its function in the Myriad Phenomenal Things, its infinite spirituality is called the Subtle, 微. When it expresses itself in speech, this is a manifestation of the Subtle. When it takes on itself the form of silence, this is the Separateness. So we have:



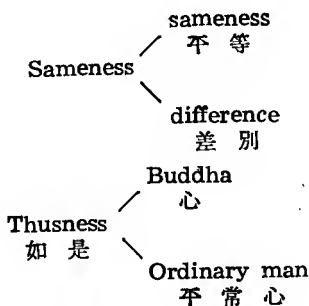
The monk's problem is: speech does not reveal the separateness, Real existence; silence, on the other hand, does not manifest the Subtle, phenomena. Silence and speech—, each is only half of the Great Way, which is both the Separateness and the Subtle. If we speak or if we are silent, either is a "transgression" of the whole, since it is only a part.

The manner in which this philosophical problem has arisen in the minds of ordinary men may be something like this. When we see phenomena, divided as they are into the positive and negative categories of white

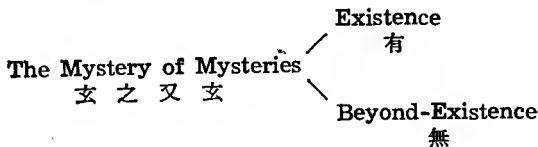
and not white, here and not here, is and is not, we suppose, rightly or wrongly, that there is some absolute which subsumes these relatives. But immediately, to our dichotomising minds, we get another pair of relatives, and we begin to seek for some Super-Absolute which shall subsume the absolute and the relative. But there is no end to this; we shall only go further and further into obscurity, endlessly dividing, and dividing again.

The monk's question, then, is not the simple one, how shall we transcend the relatives of speech and silence, but how shall we transcend the absolute of silence and the relative of speech. However, the answer is the same for both questions, which shows that both questions are really the same: "How shall we transcend?"

There are many forms of the problem. In Buddhism we have:



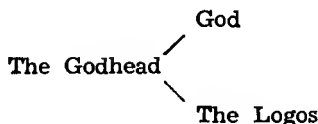
At the beginning of Laotse:



In Confucianism there is:



In Christianity:



In science and philosophy also we have such pairs and a resolution. These do not correspond at all exactly, but vaguely.

The monk's question is, "How can we go beyond Silence, and silence and speech?" Philosophically speaking, we go beyond Silence when we are silent or speak, and we go beyond silence and speech when we are Silent. So the problem is, "How can we be Silent and silent? How can we be Silent and speak?" In the *Yuimakyō*, Vimalakirti solves it by being Silent and silent. He says nothing in reply to Manjusri's demand<sup>1</sup>; his is "a thundering silence." Fuketsu solves it by being Silent and speaking. He quotes from some old poem that comes spontaneously into his mind. The point is that Silence alone won't do, nor will silence or speech. The Silence must always be there, but so must silence or speech.

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1. Manjusri says, "In my view, there is no word to utter, no symbol, nothing to be known, and when we transcend all forms of questioning, we enter the gate of Advaita, non-duality." Yuima says all this by his silence.

## THE COMMENTARY

風穴機如掣電，得路便行。爭奈坐前人舌頭不斷。若向者裏見得親切，自有出身之路。且離却語言三昧，道將一句來。

Fuketsu's activity of mind is like lightning. He has his road, and walks along it. But why does he not avoid relying upon the tongues of the ancients? If you are kind enough to express your view of the matter, there is a way out; leave all words and phrases behind, and say something!

Fuketsu does not answer the monk's question rationally. He does not explain the difference between silence and Silence and all that stuff. He automatically emits his poetically living lines. It would be better, of course, to have said something more original, even if less literary, but the important thing is not to criticise others but emit our own halo. Mumon urges us to give him another phrase or sentence which shall be Silence and speech together. But Silence and silence will do. What we must in any case provide is an activity which goes beyond and includes all relatives and all absolutes. This, it is clear, is not something done once for all, for even relatives are infinite, let alone all the absolutes. In the rather comical Case XXXVIII of the *Hekiganroku* we have a very different Fuketsu. It ends with his shouting to the monk, "Kwatz! Aren't you going to say anything else?" Rohi [the monk] just stood hesitating. Fuketsu struck him with his *hossu* and said, "Have you got hold of the meaning? Just try to express it!" Rohi began to open his mouth, and Fuketsu struck him again. The appropriate music to this would have been, not, "Lead, kindly Light," but, "Onward Christian Soldiers!"

## THE VERSE

不露風骨句	未語先分付
進步口喃喃	知君大悶措

Fuketsu did not make his own fine sentence,  
But though he did not explain, the answer is  
there.

If Fuketsu had gone on talking and chattering,  
The monk would not have known what to do.

After all, Mumon says, though Fuketsu's answer was borrowed, he did not speak with philosophical grandiloquence. To the monk's *secret* question he gave the *secret* answer. Further, brevity is not only the soul of wit, but the soul, just as God is love. Our life is from (poetic) moment to (poetic) moment; the winged joy is always in flight.

This verse, by the way, is borrowed, in its entirety from Ummon. Ummon held up his staff and said, "It has turned into a dragon which has swallowed up the whole universe; where can all the mountains and rivers and the Great Earth be?"<sup>2</sup> The present verse then follows. If we re-translate the verse as Ummon intended it, we get something like this:

There is no splendid verse to express this place;<sup>3</sup>  
The unspoken will reveal it.  
You go about talking of such things,  
But really you are at a loss.

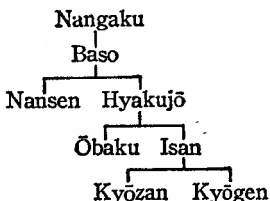
Anyway, borrowing another chap's poem, especially as it was composed in regard to so different a subject, is certainly odd.

2. See Volume II, pages 132-3.

3. Where the mountains, etc. are.

## Case XXV

### KYŌZAN'S DREAM-SERMON



#### *Dramatis Persona*

Kyōzan (Yangshan) 814-890, the co-founder of one of the branches of the Zen Sect, is of historical importance, but Mumon characteristically takes his dream as more significant. Kyōzan became a monk at seventeen after presenting his parents with the 3rd and 4th fingers of his left hand, as they had refused to allow him to enter the priesthood. He was born about the time of Hyakujō's death, and was a contemporary of Seppō. In Japan this was the era of Kōbō Daishi, that is, Kūkai, 774-835, of the Shingon Sect, and of Dengyō Daishi, that is, Saichō, 767-822, founder of the Tendai Sect in Japan. After various pilgrimages, Kyōzan reached Isan, where he stayed fifteen years. The fact that the sect is called Igyō shows how well Isan and Kyōzan accorded in thought and temperament. Case XXXIV of the *Hekiganroku*, one of the most charming, soft-pedal pieces, and Case LXVIII, where Sanshō and Ejaku, that is, Kyōzan, change names, show him as a mild character, but the following is more violent.

While Kyōzan was living at Tōhei, Isan sent him a letter together with a mirror<sup>1</sup>. Kyōzan was in the pulpit. He received the letter, and said to the as-

1. This is of course a (cast) bronze mirror, not glass.

sembled monks, "Now, all of you! Isan has sent me a mirror. Just say, is this Isan's mirror or Tōhei's (= my) mirror? If you say it is Tōhei's—didn't it come from Isan? And if you say it is Isan's, isn't it here? If you can say a word of Zen, I will keep it. If you can't, I will break it!" He said this three times, but no one answered, so he broke it.

## THE CASE

仰山和尚，夢見徃彌勒所，安第三座，有一尊者，白槌云，今日當第三座說法，山乃起白槌云，摩訶衍法，離四句絕百非，諦聽諦聽。

Kyōzan dreamed a dream. He thought he went to Maitreya's place, and sat down in the 3rd seat.<sup>2</sup> A monk there struck with a gavel and said, "To-day, the sermon is to be given by the one in the 3rd seat." Kyōzan stood up, struck with the gavel and said, "The truth of Makaen is beyond the Four Propositions and transcends the Hundred Negations. Hear the Truth!"

In some versions, it is the 2nd seat, and there is a coda:

The assembled monks all departed. He then woke

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2. It is only a curious coincidence, but in a book of a far-distant country, completed several hundred years before, *The Talmud*, it is written that when Rabbi Yohanan heard of the marvels that attended a discourse on the Merkabah (Chariot) mysticism, he cried out,

"I saw myself with you in a dream, seated upon Mount Sinai, and I heard a heavenly voice exclaiming, 'Ascend hither; ascend hither.... You and your disciples are destined to be in the third set.'"

The "third set" means the third of the three classes of angels that attend upon God.



up, and told the dream to Isan, who said, "You have attained the Holy Seat!" Kyōzan bowed.

Maitreya, who came in Case V, is the messianic Buddha, who is to come, and is now waiting in the Tusita Heaven. Here all Buddhas are reborn, as was Sakyamuni, before descending to earth as the next Buddha. This is the realm to which Kyōzan ascended in his dream.

Makaen(na) is the representation of the sound of Mahayana. Mahayana, as contrasted with the Hinayana may be thus described. It belongs to Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea, Japan (the Hinayana to Ceylon, Burma, and Siam). It is the developed (not the original) teaching of Buddha. It explains things on broad, social lines, with less emphasis on asceticism and solitariness. The ideal is that of the Bodhisattva who denies himself Nirvana to save all creatures. (The Hinayana has the Arhat, or Rakan). Besides the historical Buddha there is also the Eternal Buddha. The Mahayana begins about the time of Christ; and is transcendental like the Gospel of John.

Psychologically speaking, this dream is a model dream for an enlightened man. It is evidently a wish-fulfilment, showing that Kyōzan wishes, in the deepest recesses of his being, to save all creatures. He realises first his own importance, like Traherne in *Centuries of Meditations*. He has no hesitation in preaching before the next Buddha, but what he says has no egoism in it. Freedom is the theme, a selfless freedom; and yet (such is the teaching of Christianity) only by being thoroughly bound (united) to all things can we be released from them.

Further, from the point of view of Zen, a dream has the same value, validity, belief-compelling power, as the most considered and weighty words of Christ or Buddha or Confucius or Aristotle. This comes out in the idea of the world as a dream, the dream of all the men in it as Chuangtse implies.

The Four Terms are explained in several ways. For example, as one, different, is, and is not, 一, 異, 有, 無. Also, more understandably, as existing, 有; non-existing 無; both existing and non-existing, 亦有亦無; and neither existing nor non-existing, 非有非無. Again, the Hundred Negations are arrived at in different ways, for example, by multiplying the four into sixteen; then introducing the past, present and future, by which we get forty eight. These are doubled, as having already arisen, or being about to arise, ninety six, and by adding, somewhat swindlingly, the original four again, we get the Hundred negations. Better is to take "hundred" as meaning infinite in number.

The Mahayana can be looked on in two ways, as Self-subsistence, and as Manifestation. The Immutable Substance (the Godhead) manifests itself as life-and-death, and has, through its secret wisdom, which equals mercy, the function of transforming all creatures. It is thus the complement of Case XXI. The Buddha, the personalisation of the Mahayana is a dried shit-scraper.

Thinking lastly of this Case as a kōan, there are two points to be grasped. First, can you preach? You must preach at every moment (for even its sleep the soul yearns for God.) Whether there is an audience or not, before 10,000 people or alone, in the middle of the Sahara, in the prime of life, or at the point of death, you must preach, you must let your light shine before men.

Who is preaching? Is it not only a dream, and a butterfly's dream at that? To whom do you preach? And what do you preach? Paul says, "I preach Christ crucified." This is a rhetorical, a dramatic, and a dangerous way of saying "I suffer with Christ. Christ suffers in me. How about you? Won't you suffer with us?" This now sounds rather namby-pamby, Salvation Army-ish. No wonder Confucius said, "I do not wish to speak."

The second point is being free of the Four Terms and Hundred Negatives, in other words, from intellectual

worries. Fuketsu, in the previous Case, experiences his freedom from relativity in the lines he quotes; Tōzan in his three pounds of flax; Buddha in holding up the flower. All are freedom from intellectual rather than emotional bonds. Here Buddhism is different from Christianity, which is an avoidance of sin in the heart. Buddhism is the avoidance of sin in the head.

## THE COMMENTARY

且道是說法不說法。開口即失，閉口又喪。不開不閉，十萬八千。

Now tell me, did Kyōzan preach, or did he not? If he opens his mouth, he is lost; if he shuts it he is lost. If he neither opens it nor shuts it, he is a hundred and eight thousand miles away from reality.

Mumon's questions form the beginning of the Hundred Negations. He wants us to transcend them all, and yet speak or be silent. Did Kyōzan preach? Was it not after all only a dream? Is what we call real life any different from a dream? In the Nō play *Hachinoki*, 鉢木, it says, "Whence (I have) come and (whither I) go all vague and unknown," 行方さだめぬ道なれば——来し方も何くなまし。But it also says, "The dream world,——awakening we throw it aside, and reality appears, 夢の世なれば驚きて——捨つるや現なるらん。Was Kyōzan's dream the reality, and our reality only a dream? Did St. Francis really preach only when he did so to the birds and the fishes?

Preaching means giving Something to somebody. It is in a way the opposite of prayer, which is receiving something from Somebody. Does God pray? He certainly preaches. Mencius says that it is the great fault of men that they want to preach, 人之患在好爲人師。Is man's vice God's virtue? The answer must be that

it is all right to preach, in fact, wrong not to teach, when we dream it as Kyōzan did, as Bach and Bashō did, as Nature does.

The rather odd number, by the way, 108,000, seems to be a kind of parody of the 100,000 miles away to the west which Paradise is according to the *Amida-kyō*.

## THE VERSE

白日青天	夢中說夢
捏怪捏怪	誑謔一衆

In broad daylight,  
He expounds a dream, while yet a-dream.  
Bogie of bogies,  
He is just upsetting the whole congregation.

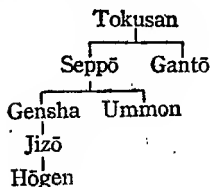
The first line means that everything is as clear as daylight. There is nothing behind phenomena, no mystery of life, no riddle of the universe; everything is as it is. As for Kyōzan's preaching, that was only a dream, an illusion, because there is nothing to explain. A book on Zen, a translation of the *Mumonkan*,—what a tissue of absurdities!

Life is real, life is earnest  
And the grave is not our goal

This is itself a dream, a low-class dream; Zen is a high-class one.

## Case XXVI

### TWO MONKS' BLIND-ROLLING



#### *Dramatis Personae*

Hōgen, founder of the Hōgen Sect or Branch of Zen, was born in 885. When he was six years old, Kyōzan of the previous Case, died. When Ummon died, Hōgen was sixty four. After his enlightenment under Jizō, he became the head of several great temples and died in 958. His teaching methods may be illustrated by the following.

Tokushō, 907-999, of Tendai, went round to no less than fifty four Zen masters, but could not get enlightened under any of them. At last he came to Saisen, where Hōgen was teaching. Hōgen at a glance saw what he was capable of, but Tokushō simply entered the temple as an ordinary monk. One day Hōgen ascended the rostrum, and a monk came forward and asked him. "What is a drop of water from the source of Sō?"<sup>1</sup> Hōgen replied, "It is a drop of water from the source of Sō." The monk looked dazed, and went back to his place. Tokushō, who was nearby, became enlightened. The problems of his whole life were now solved.

Hōgen was a great exponent of the Avatamsaka, the

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1. Sō means Sōkei, "Sō valley," where the 6th Patriarch lived. The monk means, "What is the essence of his teaching?"

Buddhism of the Kegon-gyō. The Kegon School was founded in China by Tojun, who died in 640. The Sutra was first translated by Buddhābhadda, who arrived in China in 406. The Sect went to Japan in the 8th century. The Kegon teaching is that the real world is timeless and placeless, yet not static. Here is everywhere, but not undifferentiated. Logic, consistency, verisimilitude and relativity are all transcended. Love (compassion) makes the world go round. By interpenetration, every single thing is itself, a single limited thing, and all other things, and all things. "This world" and the real world are not two. Thus the monk wanted Hōgen to give him "one drop" of Enō's Zen, because if we get one drop we get all the oceans of the world.

Another example of Hōgen's philosophical Zen.

A monk said to Hōgen, "The teaching [of the Sutras] is that all things have their origin in the Impermanent; what is this 'Impermanent Origin'?" Hōgen said, "Form arises from the not-yet-qualified; the name arises from the not-yet-named."

The monk's question is taken from the *Yuima-kyō*, the 7th chapter. Manjusri is asking the (chain of) questions, and Yuima is answering. At the end, Manjusri asks, "What is the root of upside-down and delusive ideas?" Yuima answers, "Impermanence." "What is the root of Impermanence?" "It has no origin, Manjusri; from this Origin of Impermanence all things arise." Hōgen answers in the words of the *Hōzōron*, 寶藏論, that is, Jōron, 肇論.<sup>2</sup>

## THE CASE

清凉大法眼因僧齋前上參，眼以手指簾。時有二僧，同去卷簾。眼曰，一得一失。

Hōgen of Seiryō went to the hall to speak to

2. See Case XXIV.

the monks before the midday meal. He pointed at the bamboo blinds.<sup>3</sup> At this moment, two monks went and rolled them up. Hōgen said, "One has it, the other hasn't."<sup>4</sup>

Hōgen is putting his monks, *without their realising it*, in the same position as Nansen's monks with regard to the cat. Has the cat the Buddha nature or not? This is not easy to answer, but we can swindle on it if we are clever enough, because it does not concern us so personally. Hōgen's question is, ostensibly, "Which of the two monks is enlightened?" But at the back is a far more important and difficult question. "What is the difference between a man with, and a man without enlightenment? Does it matter? Is not this question itself anti-Zen?" The answer to all this is that Hōgen is teaching his monks what Zen is, and what it is not. Refraining from differentiation,—this is not Zen. White is white and black is black. Satori is satori, and no satori is no satori. But white is also black, and black white. Satori is also mayoi, mayoi satori. As Hamlet did not say, "The 'also' is all." The monks heard Hōgen praise one monk and blame the other, and they heard him rightly. But what they did not hear was Hōgen's praising both and blaming both.

At this time in Chinese Zen monasteries, everything was done in public, from which we get *Kō-an*, public affirmation, and the Master had to teach all the monks while he was addressing one, and of course vice-versa. Teaching is a kind of teasing, and to arouse the Great Doubt, 大疑. the doubt of Zen itself, was the first work of the Master. In *Rinzai-roku* we have the following:

On that day, the chief monks of both Halls, facing each other, uttered a "Kwatz!" at the same time. A monk asked Rinzai, "Was there a superior and an

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3. They should have been raised.

4. Literally, "One, profit; one, loss."

inferior here, or not?" Rinzai answered, "The superior and inferior are plain and unmistakable."

How can there be sameness without difference? How can there be Creator without creatures? Not because they are relative to each other so much as because they are *also* one thing.

In Case LI of the *Shōyōroku* we have the following:

Hōgen asked a newly-arrived monk, "Did you come by land, or by boat?" "By boat". "Where is the boat?" "It's on the river." After the monk retired, Hōgen said to his monks, "Tell me, the monk just now,—has he the Buddha-eye or not?"

We may compare this with Case XIII of the *Hekiganroku*.

A monk asked Haryō,<sup>5</sup> "What is the Daiba, (Deva)<sup>6</sup> Sect?" Haryō answered, "Snow piled up in a silver bowl."

The monk expected Haryō to say something about the Deva Sect. In Buddhism there are two Sects, the Buddha Heart Sect 佛心宗, and the Buddha Word Sect, 佛語宗. But if there were no talking sects there would be no silent one. Forms without things, things without forms, loss without gain, gain without loss, loss which is loss only, gain which is gain only,—how can we see the two monks rolling up the blinds, not two but one, not one but two,—one perfunctorily, trivially, the other cosmically,—but both perfectly, both Buddhistically, loss here, gain there, but loss in every thing, gain in every thing,—how shall we see this?

5. A fellow-disciple of Ummon with Tōzan of the 3 lbs of flax Case.

6. The 15th Patriarch, Kanadeva, converted by Nagarjuna, was extremely skilful in logic, philosophy, and debate. From this, the name Deva Sect was given to any of the Teaching Sects.



## THE COMMENTARY

且道是誰得誰失。若向者裏著得一隻眼，便知清涼國師  
敗闕處。然雖如是，切忌向得失裏商量。

Tell me, which one profited, which made a loss? If your eye is single, you will realise that Teacher Seiryō failed. Nevertheless, I am not making the mistake of dealing with profit and loss.

As usual, Mumon is trying to "tease us out of thought," not with eternity, but with alternatives. And he wittily tells us that Hōgen himself was a failure in his teaching. How can raising alternatives cure the habit of dealing with them? So at the end Mumon denies that he is talking about alternatives at all. We can only get clear by becoming more mystified, and this is the solution of the Case. The word "transcend" is a dangerous word. We need another word which shall mean going deeper into gain and loss, not beyond them. When we reach Gain, we arrive at Loss, for extremes meet, but there is still gain and loss in our world. Love me only! But love everybody else too! But love me only! But....Zen is this row of dots.

## THE VERSE

卷起明明徹太空	、 太空猶未合吾宗
爭似從空都放下	綿綿密密不通風

When they are rolled up, the great sky is bright  
and clear,  
But the great sky has no affinity with Zen.

To have nothing to do with the sky is better,  
And never let the wind through.

When the blinds are rolled up, the dark hall is illuminated by the bright sky. The obscure variety of the hall is engulfed in the sameness of the sunlight. But this sameness is not the object of Zen. To be free of difference, free of sameness, is Paradise. Mumon seems to think the sameness more dangerous than the differences. In this sense philosophy, the love of Oneness, will clip the wings of Zen.

Quite apart from the meaning of the Case, Mumon says that Hōgen should have left the blinds as they were, so as not to "blind" the monks with "the white radiance of eternity." So the teacher of Chu Hsi said that the Emptiness, 空, is like a vast desert, but it is full of things like a great forest. This verse, as Hakuin Zenji says, is not Mumon at his best.

## Case XXVII

### NANSEN'S NO MIND, NO BUDDHA

#### *Dramatis Personae*

The life of the cat-killing Nansen has been given in Volume III. Here is one more saying from the *Shōyōroku*, Case LXIX:

南泉示衆云，三世諸佛不知有，狸奴白牯却知有。

Nansen said to the assembled monks, "The Buddhas of the Three Worlds<sup>1</sup>—we know nothing of their existence. What we know is the existence of cats and oxen."

We don't know Buddha or Buddhism or Zen or such-like things. We don't know heat or cold, but only this hot water and that hot water, and these things are nameless; this knowledge is unspeakable. "Weisheit ist nicht mitteilbar," as Hermann Hesse says. When we talk about Buddha this is not merely second-hand, but damaged goods, with as much relation to a fish in the sea as a fish on a fish-monger's slab. What we know is things, not the Super-Essences described in the Hermetic books. From all this we may go on to the Case.

#### THE CASE

南泉和尚因僧問云，還有不與人說底法麼，泉云，有。僧云，如何是不與人說底法。泉云，不是心，不是佛，不是物。

A monk asked Nansen, "Is there a truth which

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1. Past, present, and future.

no one has taught?" Nansen replied, "There is." "What is this truth," said the monk, "which no one has so far taught?" Nansen answered, "It is not mind; it is not Buddha; it is not things."

What is "it," omitted so conveniently—inconveniently in the Chinese original? "It" must mean reality, the nature of things, the Ground of all existence. The word "mind" may be written also Mind, but this makes it equal to Buddha, so it is better to take it as human nature. Nansen is denying both idealism and materialism. In Case XXX Baso declares that mind is Buddha. In Case XXXIII he declares it is not. In Case XXVIII of the *Hekiganroku* Nansen says to Hyakujō what he told the monk in the present Case. Hyakujō asks, "Is that all?" and Nansen in the end admits he doesn't understand, and Hyakujō says, "I have now expounded to you what no one has expounded up to now."

Mumon does not keep to any order in the matter, but, beginning with Case XXX, and Baso declaring "Your mind,—that is the Buddha," we must at first sight agree. This is the teaching of the Upanishads. You are that. The microcosmos is the macrocosmos. How about this stone? Wordsworth said, when he saw the stone doing zazen by the roadside,

Even to the loose stone by the roadside,  
I gave a moral being.

Did Wordsworth give the Buddha nature to the stone? Or did it not give him the Buddha nature? Is the stone in the mind or outside it? This was the question Jizō asked Hōgen, and like Pilate, did not wait for the (right) answer. His question should rather have been, "Is the stone the mind, your mind?"

Nansen cuts the entangled Gordian knot by declaring that it is not the mind, nor the Mind. In doing this he contradicts 三界唯一心, "In the Three worlds all is simply One Mind." He also negates 一切衆生悉有佛性,

"All living things have the Buddha Nature," 唯識無境, "All is mind and no objective thing exists", and 識外無法, "Nothing exists apart from mind." Nansen denies that the Eternal Buddha is the Ultimate Reality. Last, he does away with the idea that 諸法實相, "All things in their real aspect" are reality. In a sense Nansen here rejects the experience of the poet that things have, in being what they are, Absolute Value.

In all this Nansen is making his way towards what Hyakujō finally taught him, what Socrates knew, and what Jizō taught Hōgen, that the profoundest experience we have is of "I don't know," which implies "I don't know yet." Zen, like life, is fluid; the intellect solidifies it in order to grasp it, and it is Zen no longer.

Thus, when a Zen master makes an assertion, affirmative or negative, we are not to take it as an assertion of truth, relative or absolute. It is something moving, "something evermore about to be," so that Nansen should perhaps have said, "It is the movement of mind, of Buddha, of things." This movement is free, inevitable, and poetical. We hear it in the works of Bach, particularly those for organ. It is seen often in haiku. From this point of view there is no Zen in the famous verse:

枯枝に鳥のとまりけり秋の暮

On a withered branch  
A crow is perched:  
An autumn evening.

Here the poetical movement is only from the sombre-looking crow to the soberness of an evening of autumn. When there is too much movement the Zen also disappears on the way, as in Buson's otherwise very fine verse:

菜の花や鯨もよらず海暮れぬ

Flowers of rape:

No whale approaches;  
The sea darkens.

An *Ancient Mariner*-like verse by Bashō, where the poetical movement is smooth and continuous, through the dreamy nature ascribed to the living things and to the heavenly body:

蛸壺やはかなき夢を夏の月

The octopuses in the jar-trap:  
Transient dreams  
Under the summer moon.

## THE COMMENTARY

南泉被者一問，直得搥盡家私，郎當不少。

Nansen was just asked a question, and,—at once used up all his treasure, decrepit old chap!

“Treasure” may be used in two meanings. On the one hand Nansen said everything he had thought and experienced up to the moment of being questioned, and this must have given him a feeling of nausea. However, Nansen was a teacher and this is what a teacher must do and endure. It is the wisdom of babes to confound the wise and prudent.

We can also take treasure in a bad sense, the treasures of our ideas of decency, of morality, our feeling of the fitness of things, our ideals, our religious beliefs. The chief characters in *Martin Chuzzlewit* are Mr. Pickwick and Mrs. Gamp. Mr. Pickwick is a liar, a money-lover, a hypocrite, a swindler, ungrateful, unloving, a swinish, merciless creature. Mrs. Gamp is a ghoulish, dirty, cruel, garrulous, self-centred, obese monster. But such is Dickens’ Zen that we skip the pages to get to them. We throw overboard all our treasures. What do we get in return? Read *Martin Chuzzlewit* and you will know, and though you can say with Nansen that it is

not mind, not Buddha, not things, you must say with Hyakujo that this knowing is a not-knowing, an incommunicable open secret.

All the treasures that we can give to others, however proudly we bestow them, however gratefully received, are all nothing. But when we realise this, then we do give something, and something is received.

## THE VERSE

叮嚀損君德	無言真有功
任從滄海變	終不爲君通

Too kind, Nansen lost his value;  
 What an effect no-words has!  
 The blue ocean may change,  
 But Nansen has simply made everything more  
 incomprehensible.

The first two lines depreciate the value of words. Emerson says, "What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say." But the reverse is true. What you say, and your tone of voice makes me disbelieve in the possibility of your salvation. In any case, no-words has its value only in contrast to talking, and thus Milton was right to divorce his wife for her taciturnity.

The third line is reminiscent of many passages in Chinese poetry, in which the changes in the face of nature are perceived with grief. Mumon says that it is possible for the sea to change into a mulberry field, but it is not possible to explain Zen in (unpoetical) words. When the poetry (and we may add, the humour innate in the universe) is omitted, scientific and philosophical words strive in vain to put the (poetical) meaning back again. Nansen, it is true, told us what reality is not, but this also is wrong. All leading, to or from, is misleading.

## Case XXVIII

### RYŪTAN'S CANDLE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Ryūtan<sup>1</sup> (Lungtan) was the spiritual son of Tennō Dōgo, who is famous for his manner of dying. "He then took his staff, and, throwing it upon the ground, gave up the ghost." Ryūtan's father kept a shop, and when a boy, Ryūtan used to take rice cakes to Dōgo at Tennō Temple, ten every day, and Dōgo always kept back one for him. One day he asked Dōgo why he gave him this cake. Dōgo answered, "What is wrong with my giving you back what you have brought?" Understanding the inner meaning of this, Dōgo became a priest in this temple. Afterwards he had his own temple and taught assiduously. The date of his death, as of his birth, is unknown.

Tokusan (Teshan), the spiritual son of Ryūtan, became a monk in his later years, studied the sutras, and was called the king of the *Kongō Sutra*. The incident of his being defeated by an old woman is given by Mumon in the Commentary, which, chronologically speaking, should come before the Case. After his enlightenment he burned his books and did zazen. During the Buddhist persecutions he hid in a cave. After having his own temple and enlightening many of his disciples he died in 865.

An account of his visiting Isan is given in Volume II.

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1. Also pronounced Ryōtan.



## THE CASE

龍潭因德山請益抵夜，潭云，夜深，子何不下去。山遂珍重，揭簾而出，見外面黑却回云，外面黑。潭乃點紙燭度與。山擬接，潭便吹滅。山於此忽然有省，便作禮。潭云。子見箇甚麼道理。山云，某甲從今日去，不疑天下老和尚舌頭也。至明日龍潭陞堂云，可中有箇漢，牙如劍樹，口似血盆，一棒打不回頭。他時異日，向孤峰頂上，立吾道在。山遂取疎抄，於法堂前，將一炬火提起云，窮諸玄辯，若一毫致於太虛，竭世樞機，似一滴投於巨壑。將疏抄便燒，於是禮辭。

Tokusan went one night to Ryūtan to ask for his teaching. At last Ryūtan said, "It is late; you had better go back." Tokusan made his bows, lifted the blind and went out. Seeing how dark it was outside, he came back in, and said, "It's dark out there." Ryūtan lit a lantern<sup>2</sup> and handed it to him. Tokusan was about to take it, when Ryūtan blew it out. At this Tokusan was enlightened. He made obeisance. "What have you realised?" asked Ryūtan. Tokusan replied, "From now on I will not doubt what you<sup>3</sup> have said." The next day Ryūtan ascended the rostrum and declared, "Among you there is a chap whose fangs are like the sword-tree<sup>4</sup>, his mouth a blood-bowl<sup>5</sup>. Strike him with a stick, he won't turn his head to look at you. Some day or other he will climb

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2. A candle with paper round it.

3. Or, "all the Zen masters." Tokusan means he will not doubt the fact of enlightenment.

4. See Case XVII, The Verse.

5. This is perhaps reminiscent of the red, cavernous mouths of (the picture and statues of) Devas and demons.

to the highest of all peaks and establish my Way there." Tokusan then made a bonfire of his commentaries on the sutras in front of the Hall, and declared, "All the most profound teachings are like a single hair in vast space. The farthest extreme of human wisdom is a drop of water thrown into a deep ravine." Having burnt up all his notes<sup>6</sup> he took his departure.

What truth did Tokusan perceive in the blowing out of the light that he could not grasp in the *Diamond Sutra*? What use is the *Diamond Sutra*? Why can't other people be enlightened by blowing out candles? These questions suggest that though all enlightenment is the same, in being clarifying, refreshing, joyfulness, relief, believing,—it is different, just as there is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, just as the perfection of a snail is different from the perfection of Venus.

The sudden darkness which Tokusan experienced is different and yet the same as the "nothingness" of the sutra which he had studied so long. And so we may answer the previous question and say that anyone can be "enlightened" by darkness if he studies the *Kongōkyō* as desperately as Tokusan did. Anybody can write *Paradise Lost* if he is willing to go blind in political work. This of course is an overstatement, an oversimplification, but so was Tokusan's burning up commentaries on the *Kongōkyō* that might have enlightened someone whose spiritual obstacle was intellectual rather than physical. Why not burn the *Kongōkyō* itself? But it was this very sutra that enlightened, without any candles, but only firewood, the Sixth Patriarch.

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6. On the *Diamond Sutra* especially.

## THE COMMENTARY

德山未出關時，心憤憤，口排排。得得來南方，要滅却教外別傳之旨。及到澧州路上，問婆子買點心。婆云，大德車子內，是甚麼文字。山云，金剛經抄疏。婆云，只如經中道，過去心不可得，現在心不可得，未來心不可得。大德要點那箇心。德山被者一問，直得口似匾擔。然雖如是，未肯向婆子句下死却，遂問婆子，近處有甚麼宗師。婆云，五里外有龍潭和尚。及到龍潭，納盡敗闕。可謂是前言不應後語。龍潭大似憐兒不覺醜，見他有些子火種，郎忙將惡水蘸頭一澆澆殺。冷地看來，一場好笑。

Before Tokusan passed the barrier [of his native place] his mind was eager, his mouth was anxious<sup>7</sup>, with a purpose in his mind, he went south, to confute the doctrine of "A special transmission outside the sutras." When he got on the road to Reishū he asked an old woman to let him have something to "point his mind."<sup>8</sup> The old woman said, "Your worship, what's all that writing you are carrying?" Tokusan said, "That's the manuscript of my notes and commentary on the Diamond Sutra!" The old woman said, "In that sutra it says, 'Dispositions of mind, or modes of thought, whether relating to the past, the present, or the future, are alike unreal and illusory.'<sup>9</sup> Which of these minds is your worship intending to

7. This expression comes from the *Analects*, 子曰，不憤不啓，不排不發。Confucius said, "Those not eager [for truth] I do not open [the Ways to]; those not anxious [to understand themselves] I do not help." This passage is annotated by Shushi, with Mumon's meaning.

8. "To point the mind" means eat something (between meals) and put the mind at ease.

9. See the end of the "*Kongō-shin-gyō*."

point?" That question was a poser for Tokusan. Nevertheless, not giving up in despair to the old woman's words, he asked her, "Is there a Zen master near here?" "About five li away lives Ryūtan," she replied. He arrived at Ryūtan's quite deflated.

It must be said that the former words<sup>10</sup> and the latter words<sup>11</sup> were inconsistent. Ryūtan took pity on him quite shamelessly. Seeing that Tokusan had some fire of knowledge,<sup>12</sup> Ryūtan should have violently thrown muddy water over his head.<sup>13</sup> Looking at the whole affair impartially, it was all just a farce.

When we read Mumon's story (not his criticism of it) we cannot help thinking of Saul of Tarsus. Just as it is hard to understand why Paul should persecute the Christians, so we wonder what there was in Zen to arouse the animosity of Tokusan, the great student of the *Kongōkyō*. Not only did Enō get his enlightenment from overhearing it, quite by accident, but it says explicitly in the sutra itself, Section VII, that "there is no fixed thing for the Nyorai to preach." When we read this we must ourselves be on our guard, for it means that no statement, not even this one, is fool-proof, and every person is a fool, more or less. The Zen "transmission of truth beyond the scriptures" really boils down to "Great minds (only) think alike," and all those with great minds please hold up your hands.

The *Kongōkyō*, the Diamond Sutra, so-called because of the indestructibility of its wisdom, is one of the

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10. To crush the Zen sect, with their "transmission beyond teaching."

11. Having nothing to say to the old woman; or, his words after enlightenment, "I won't doubt the masters' words henceforward."

12. This metaphor comes from the candle.

13. Curbed him publicly, instead of praising him publicly.

shortest of the sutras, and is in fact, a condensation of the *Vajracchedika Prajnaparamita Sutra*. It was first translated by Kumarajiva, who died in the Chinese capital at the beginning of the 5th century. He also translated the *Lotus Sutra*, and many others. The *Kongōkyō* is a condensation, but it is still extremely diffuse, repetitious, and includes passages which one would like to regard as scribal interpolations, in the style of the *Kvannongyō*, for example, at the end of Chapter XIV, the following:

Subhuti, if in the future world there are good men and women who hold and recite this sutra, the Nyorai, by his Buddha knowledge, will know them by his seeing them all; they will every one acquire illimitable merits.

I have made a condensation of the sutra somewhat in the manner of the *Hannyashingyō*, where shin, heart, means essence, and this may be called a *Kongōshingyō*, 金剛心經. Repetitions have a great psychological value, but the effect on uncritical minds is excessive; they have been omitted, and we get less than one seventh of the original (Chinese) text. The Roman numerals refer to the Chapters from which the extracts are taken.

## KONGŌSHINGYŌ

- V. "Subhuti<sup>14</sup>, how do you think? Can the Nyorai (Tathagata) be seen in bodily forms or not?"  
 "World-honoured One, he cannot be recognised in bodily forms. For what reason? Because the Nyorai teaches that bodily forms are no-bodily forms." The Buddha said to Subhuti, "All form is illusion. If you see that all forms are no-forms, you have seen the Nyorai."
- VII. "Subhuti, how do you think? Has the Nyorai

14. One of the 10 disciples, the best expounder of Sunya, Vold. The principal questioner of the Great Prajna Paramita Sutra.

attained Supreme, Perfect Enlightenment? Has he expounded the Law?" Subhuti answered, "World-honoured One, if I were to explain the teaching of the Buddha I would say, 'There is no such fixed notion as to be called Supreme, Perfect Enlightenment. Again, there is no fixed thing for the Nyorai to preach [even if he wanted to]. Why? The Law preached by the Nyorai is to be disregarded, is not to be preached, is not a Law, is not a No-Law'."

X. The Buddha said to Subhuti, "How do you think? When in ancient times the Nyorai was with Nentō Buddha,<sup>15</sup> did he grasp the Law or not?" "No, World-honoured One, he did not. While the Nyorai was with Nentō Buddha, he did not grasp the Law." "How do you think Subhuti? Does a Bodhisattva glorify<sup>16</sup> the Buddha-realms or not?" "He does not, World-honoured One. Why is this? Glorifying Buddha-realms is a non-glorifying, and this is called a glorifying of them." "For this reason, Subhuti, all the Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas<sup>17</sup> should arouse their purity of mind, not allowing themselves to have the idea of form, sound, smell, taste, objects of thoughts, and *arouse their minds without letting them dwell anywhere.*"

XXIX. "Subhuti, if anyone says the Nyorai comes and goes, sits and lies down, he does not understand my teaching. Why not? Because for Nyorai there is no place of coming, no place of going. It is for this reason he is called Nyorai.<sup>18</sup>

XXVI. The World-honoured One uttered this Verse:

"If any see me in form  
If any seek me in sound,

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15. Dipamkara Buddha, the 24th predecessor of Sakyamuni; comes in the Lotus Sutra.

16. By his meditation-wisdom, and the control of good and evil forces.

17. Perfected Bodhisattvas only second to Buddhas.

18. Nyorai means "thus come," also 如行, "thus gone," translation of Tathagata which means thus gone or thus come.

He walks the wrong path;  
He can never see the Nyorai."

XIV. "Subhuti, if a Bodhisattva does his good deeds with his mind attached to the Law, he is like a man in darkness, he perceives nothing. If the Bodhisattva does his good deeds without his mind being attached to the Law, he is like a man with eyes, in the bright sunlight; all forms are clearly seen.

IV. When a Bodhisattva does his good works he must not be attached to ideas in the mind, to sounds, to smells, to taste, or touch.<sup>19</sup>

IX. "Subhuti, how do you think? Does an Arhat<sup>20</sup> think he has attained Arhatship or not?" Subhuti replied "No, World-honoured One, he does not. Why not? Because, in reality, there is not a thing that can be named Arhat. If, World-honoured One, an Arhat thought to himself, 'I have attained Arhatship', this would mean he was attached to the idea of an ego, a person, a being, a soul; he is not a Bodhisattva."

VI. If all these beings have no idea of an ego, a person, a being, a soul, they have no idea of a thing,<sup>21</sup> or of a no-thing. Why? If they had the idea of form they would be attached to an ego, a person, a being, a soul. Why? If they have the idea of a no-thing they are attached to the idea of an ego, a person, a being, a soul. For this reason, that neither a thing nor a no-thing is to be thought of. So the Nyorai always teaches you monks to know that his teaching is like a raft,—a thing to be rejected,—much more a no-thing!

XVIII. The Buddha said to Subhuti, "The various minds of all the beings of all these lands,—the Nyorai knows them all. Why is this? The Nyorai has proclaimed that all minds are no-minds, and are thus called minds. Subhuti, *the mind of the past is un-*

19. These are the 六塵, which are the cause of all impurity.

20. Rakan, Lohan.

21. Literally, "the characteristics of a thing."

*attainable, the mind of the present is unattainable,  
the mind of the future is unattainable.*

Tokusan was a specialist, an expert of the *Kongō-kyō*, and not to be able to answer a simple question about one's special subject, by an old woman, in an eating-house,—this was a blow indeed. The mind which the Sutra declares to be ungettable in all eternity is the same mind which the Second Patriarch could not bring to Daruma to be pacified. How history repeats itself!

## THE VERSE

聞名不如見面	見面不如聞名
雖然救得鼻孔	爭奈瞎却眼睛

Rather than hearing the name, seeing the face  
is better;

Rather than seeing the face, hearing the name  
is better.

But however much you help the nostrils,—  
Look what you've done to the eyes!

This is a real monkey-puzzler, even for the *Mumon-kan*, which is not child's-play even at its clearest. What Mumon seems to be saying is this. The people of Tokusan's district, though they had not seen his face, greatly respected him as a Buddhist scholar and philosopher. However, the old tea-shop woman found him out, and the face became better than the name.

As for the last two lines, the Sixth Patriarch wanted Emyō to see his real face,—but all of it, not a part. We must not do something pleasant to the nose but disagreeable to the eyes, or vice versa. All the face must be gratified. Mumon is thinking that in the



original Case there is too much praising for a delicate Zen stomach. Tokusan gained his enlightenment, but at a price, the price being the loss of (the humility of) not being enlightened. As Jizō said to Hōgen, "There is nothing more familiar than not knowing." "Familiar" means human, like Socrates, like Bashō, like Chaucer.

## Case XXIX

### ENŌ'S FLAG

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Enō, the 6th Patriarch, has already appeared in Case XXIII. Here are a few anecdotes from the *Rokuso-dangyō*, he's such a nice fellow. The following is from the end of Chapter VIII.

One day the Patriarch said to the assembled monks, "I have something that has no head, no tail, no name, no character,<sup>1</sup> no back, no front; do you monks know what it is?" Jinne<sup>2</sup> came forward and said, "I will tell you. It is the origin of all the Buddhas. It is my Buddha nature." The Patriarch said, "I told you it has no name or character, and yet you call it the origin of the Buddha nature. You may afterwards become the master of a little temple, but you will never be anything more than a lecturer on Zen."

Enō's teaching methods were very good. He told the monks something which they thought they understood, and then showed them they didn't. At the end of Chapter VII comes the following:

A monk asked the Patriarch, "What kind of man can get the teaching of Ōbai<sup>3</sup>" The Patriarch said, "The man who understands Buddhism," The monk asked, "Have you got the teaching, or not?" The Patriarch said, "I don't understand Buddhism."

In the early days of Zen such simple contradictions

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1. No Chinese character to write it with.

2. The personal attendant on the Patriarch. He was very precocious, and had an interview with the Patriarch when he was thirteen. Afterwards he was known as Katakū; he died in 760.

3. The (place where the) 5th Patriarch (lived).

and denials as these were possible. It reminds us of Christ's, "There is none good save God," and, "No man hath seen God at any time." Also at the end of Chapter VII:

A certain monk brought up a verse of Garin's:<sup>4</sup>

Garin has the ability and means<sup>5</sup>  
To cut off all thoughts<sup>6</sup>;  
His mind being unmoved by externals,  
Bodhi increases as time passes.

Hearing this, the Patriarch said, "This verse shows that the foundation of his mind is not yet known to him. To live according to this will only increase his bondage<sup>7</sup>." The Patriarch then uttered the following verse:

Enō has no ability or means  
To cut off his mind from thoughts,  
His mind is moved by externals;  
And how can Bodhi increase?

Enō has vigour without violence, simplicity without sentiment, common sense without cant.

## THE CASE

六祖因風颭利幡，有二僧對論，一云，幡動，一云，風動，往復曾未契理，祖云，不是風動，不是幡動，仁者心動。二僧悚然。

The wind was flapping a temple flag,<sup>8</sup> and two monks were having an argument about it. One said the flag was moving, the other that the wind

4. Garin is the name of a place, is all we are told.

5. By concentration of mind.

6. Of good and evil, profit and loss.

7. In this case bondage to no-things, to no-thoughts. The *Kongō-kyō*, Case XXVIII, above, warns us against this very thing.

8. The temple was Hosshōji, 法性寺, and Injū was lecturing on the *Nirvana Sutra*. The flag announced this.

was moving; and they could come to no agreement on the matter, however they argued back and forth. The Patriarch said, "It is not that the wind is moving; it is not that the flag is moving; it is that your honourable minds are moving." The two monks were struck with awe.

The account given in the *Platform Sutra* is exactly same, except for the ending. Instead of, "the two monks were awe-struck," we have:

The whole congregation was startled, and Injū led him to the rostrum and asked him concerning the occult meaning. Enō's words were simple and to the point, not mere book-knowledge but real understanding, and Injū said to him, "Lay brother, you are no ordinary man. I heard long ago that the bowl and robe of Ōbai had come south; are you not the man?" Enō answered, "It is your humble servant."

The original story, as it stands, makes no sense. What does it mean, the flag (only) is moving, or the wind (only) is moving? Even children could not quarrel upon such nonsensical alternatives, though they are accepted without question by most commentators. And if we try to distinguish the two monks as one a materialist and the other an idealist, Enō outdoes the idealist monk with a Berkeleian assertion that

All the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any substance without a mind—that their *being* is to be *perceived*, or *known*.

What would Enō have said if he had been asked, "If the monks ceased to think the flag was moving, would it stop moving?" Enō could not say, with Berkley, that the flag would continue to wave in God's mind.

To make the whole thing more creditable, let us take it in this way. The first monk says that the flag moves

(or not), moves of itself, moves because it wants to, because it is its nature to move, or not to move. As Wordsworth almost wrote:

The banner waveth at its own sweet will.

(In case anyone thinks this is fantastic, I must say that this is the poetical view of the matter, and of course mine).

The second monk is the scientific chap who thinks, rightly enough, that every effect has a cause, and every cause has an effect (but suppose a phenomenon is neither?) and pooh-poohs the infantilism, primitivism, animism, superstition, and non-rationality of the first monk.

Enō adopts the Buddhist point of view, not Zen at all, and the Christian is not very different, if we change "your mind" to your Mind, "God's mind." All three opinions are of course right: none of them is wrong. But the second makes everything objective, the third makes everything subjective. The Zen attitude is always objective-subjective, both, or neither, or transcending both,—the experience anyway is that of poetry, not of science or philosophy or theology.

## THE COMMENTARY

不是風動，不是幡動，不是心動。甚處見祖師。若向者裏見得親切，方知二僧買鐵得金。祖師忍俊不禁，一場漏逗。

It is not the wind that moves, it is not the flag that moves, it is not the mind that moves. How shall we understand the Patriarch? If you have a close grasp of the meaning, you will see how the two monks, intending to buy iron, got gold. The Patriarch could not repress his compassion, and so we have this disgraceful scene.

Mumon contradicts Enō, and declares "It is not that the mind moves." To deny, to doubt, is the essence of the spirit of life and of Zen. The deeper the faith, the deeper the doubt. It is the nay-saying spirit that leadeth us on. Mumon's asserting that it is also not the mind that is moving is like Jōshū's denying that the dog has the Buddha nature. They do not mean that it is really so though they say it is not so. They mean that the dog has the Buddha nature, poetically, and hasn't got it, poetically. They mean that the flag moves, poetically, and that the wind moves it poetically, and the mind,—that is poetry itself, alive and impersonally personal.

## THE VERSE

風幡心動	一狀領過
只知開口	不覺話墮

The wind moves, the flag moves, the mind moves,—

All confirmed as guilty of error.

We know we open our mouths,

But we don't know we go all wrong.

The two monks said too much, from quartersomeness; Enō, out of commiseration, but too much is always too much. How much is too much? Anything is too much. God made a mistake when he first created the world, and things have gone from bad to worse ever since.

In speaking, only one part of reality is expressed; the other half still lies latent. A particular thing is that particular thing only; it is also everything else in the world. We cannot make both these statements at the same time. In music it is possible to *hear* two parts at once, but it is very difficult to *listen* to both at once.

Thus Zen speaking or acting consists of doing one thing only as if doing both, eating as if not eating, writing as if not writing. Actually to do both is not possible. Our humanity permits us, and indeed demands from us the "as if."

## Case XXX

### BASO'S VERY MIND

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Daibai (Tamei) was born in 752, when Baso was forty four. After he became enlightened, as related in the present Case, he entered the mountains and lived in a hermitage there. When he was asked to come to the city he replied:

The remaining boughs of the withered, blasted tree  
Hang over the chilly forest.  
However often spring comes  
Its heart is not changed.  
The woodcutter does not give a glance at it.  
Why should [we] country people seek for distress  
[in the city]?  
The lotus leaves of one pool is more than enough for  
clothes;  
A few pine trees with their fruits suffice for food.  
People of the world have found out my dwelling place.  
I will remove my reed-thatched home deeper into  
the recesses of the mountains.

In the later years of his life he built a temple near the hermitage.

An account of Baso is given in Volume III. An anecdote on the very subject of the present Case is found at the beginning of *Baso-roku*:

Addressing the congregation of monks, Baso said, "You must each of you realise that your mind is the Buddha. Your mind—that is the Buddha! Daruma came from Southern India to China, transmitting the One Mind of the Mahayana, in order to bring you to a state of realisation, to approve and seal your Mental Ground. He quoted from the *Lankavatara Sutra*—fearing lest you should not believe, in your perversity,



CASE XXX

Baso, by Sengai

The inscription says:

One "Kwatz!" Three days!  
Baso's "Kwatz!" is said to  
have made Hyakujo deaf for  
three days.





that each of you has this Mind,—where it says, 'Buddhism takes the mind as its basic principle, no-gate as the Gate into the Truth. Thus he who seeks the law must not look for it in a specific place. Outside the mind there is no Buddha; outside the Buddha there is no mind.'

## THE CASE

馬祖因大梅問，如何是佛，祖云，即心即佛。

Daibai asked Baso, "What is the Buddha?" Baso answered, "The mind is the Buddha."

When we ask "What, who, which, where, how, when, why is the Buddha?" the form of the question already forbids the right answer. The *Shinjimmei* says, "As soon as you have "this or that", the Mind is lost." However, it is not lost because the Buddha is everything, not merely this or that. The *Shinjimmei* also says, "Do not keep to the One." Our minds, which plume themselves above all things on distinguishing good and evil, God and Devil, truth and error, by this very distinction commit a greater error than the whole-hearted embracing of the error:

If a fool would persist in his folly he would become wise.

But this is not the folly of distinguishing but the folly of not distinguishing. The word mind does not mean the Buddha mind, for this would make Baso's answer tautology: "The mind (or Buddha) is Buddha." Clearly "mind" means Hitler's mind, or a kangaroo's mind, or the mind of a dew-drop trembling from the eaves with "a mind to fall." It does not mean that my mind is part of the World-Soul, but that my soul is the whole of the World-Soul. Let us rise to the occasion, and vehemently

declare that the Buddha, the World-Soul is part of My Soul, so that we should translate Baso's answer once more "The Buddha,—that is Your Mind!"

## THE COMMENTARY

若能直下領略得去，著佛衣，喫佛飯，說佛話，行佛行，即是佛也。然雖如是，大梅引多少人，錯認定盤星。爭知道說箇佛字，三日漱口。若是箇漢，見說即心即佛，掩耳便走。

If you have grasped Baso's meaning, you are wearing Buddha's clothes, eating Buddha's food, speaking Buddha's words, doing Buddha's deeds, that is to say, you are Buddha himself. But though this may be so, Daibai has misled not a few people into mistaking the mark on the balance for the weight itself. He doesn't realise that if we explain the word "Buddha" we must rinse out our mouths for three days afterwards. If he had been a man of understanding, when he heard Baso say, "The mind is the Buddha," he would have covered his ears and rushed away.

In the Introduction to Case II of the *Hekiganroku* we have:

Say the word "Buddha", and you wallow in mud and flounder in puddles. Say the word "Zen", and your whole face is as red as a beetroot with shame and humiliation.

There is the famous story of *Eisen no mimi-arai*. The Emperor Gyō sent a messenger to a hermit named Kyoyū, offering to abdicate and hand over the Empire to him. Kyoyū not only flatly refused, but upon hearing such a filthy suggestion washed his ears in the river Ei, 潁川. Another hermit, Sōfu, coming there to

water his ox, and seeing this, led his ox away, saying he would not let it drink such dirty water.

This kind of thing, strangely enough, is not to be found in Christianity. There is the word "religiosity" and "sanctimonious" as applied to particular people, but Zen feels sick with too much Zen. (The Zen) Buddha would like to have a rest sometimes, and swat flies and read a detective story and over-eat clotted cream.

## THE VERSE

青天白日	切忌尋覓
更問如何	抱賊叫屈

It is broad daylight, a fine day;  
It is silly to rummage around,  
And asking about the Buddha  
Is like declaring oneself innocent while holding  
on to the stolen goods.

In the clear sky of Zen there is not a "Mind-is-Buddha" cloud. There is no need to search for truth or ask what the meaning of life is. If you have the thing in your pocket all the time, why should you say you haven't got it?

Mumon tells us that we are the Buddha,—only we mustn't say so! Why not? Saying so makes the Buddha something apart from ourselves, just as the words in the dictionary are apart from things. When we can speak a language, we don't need the book of words. When we live the Christian, the Buddhist, the Zen life, such phrases are meaningless. Telling us that our mind is the Buddha is like going out with someone who insists on telling us all the historical anecdotes of places and the botanical names of all the pretty weeds.

## Case XXXI

### JŌSHŪ'S OLD WOMAN

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Jōshū has already appeared in Cases, I, VII, XI, XIV, XIX, and will come once more in XXXVII. In the *Hekiganroku*, he plays a role in II, IX, XXX, XLI, XLV, LII, LVII, LVIII, LIX, LXIV, LXXX, and XCVI. As for the old woman, we had one before, who defeated Tokusan, and now another who has, unwittingly, a tourney with Jōshū. Zen is not for women<sup>1</sup> and women are not for Zen; so much the worse for both. Buddhism has always been anti-feminist, more so even than Christianity, whose founder seems to have found inspiration in the company of women. Women occasionally appear in the sutras, but in a hardly gratifying way. In the *Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law*, Chapter XII, Devadatta, we are told of a girl who became a Buddha. Sariputra raised various objections to a woman attaining Buddhahood, a woman being "defiled, 垢穢, and unfit for the reception of the law," 非法器, and said she had the Five Obstacles<sup>2</sup> also. The congregation saw her *change herself into a young man* and become a perfect Bodhisattva. The conclusion is (not intentionally) sinister: Sariputra and the others "received the law faithfully in silence."

#### THE CASE

趙州因僧問婆子，臺山路向甚處去，婆云，暮直去，僧纔行三五步，婆云，好箇師僧，又恁麼去，後有僧舉似州，州云，待我去與你勘過這婆子。明日便去，亦如是問，婆亦如是答。州歸謂衆曰，臺山婆子，我與汝勘破了也。

1. But see Case XLII.

2. Inability to become Brahma-kings, Indras, Mara-kings, Cakravarti-kings, or Buddhas.

A monk of Jōshū's asked an old woman the way to Taizan. She said, "Go straight on." After the monk had taken three or five steps, she said, "This monk also goes off like that."<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, another monk told Jōshū about this, and Jōshū said, "Wait a bit; I'll go and investigate this old lady for you." The next day off he went, and asked the same question and got the same reply. On returning, Jōshū said to the congregation of monks, "I've investigated the old lady of Taizan for you."

Taizan, or Gotaizan, or Seiryōzan was a specially holy, five-peak mountain from the time of Six Dynasties. Pilgrimages to it were unceasing. It was dedicated to Manjusri.

Case X of the *Shōyōroku* begins a little differently:

There was an old woman on the road at the foot of Taizan, who, whenever a monk asked the way there, used to say, etc., etc.

With a smattering of Zen it is not difficult to make a fool of people. There seem to have been quite a number of old women who made themselves useful round the famous mountains (temples), pulling the legs of young monks. No doubt some of the old women were genuine, some not, and this is what Jōshū "investigates."

The monk asks the way to the temple. The old woman answers as if he were asking about the Way, and tells him, as Stevenson says, "The way is straight like the grooves of launching," but the monk is quite oblivious of this, and thinks she is answering the plain, relative question in the plain relative way. When the monk does not respond to her absolute answer, she sneers at him, out loud. Jōshū conducts his investigation. Though

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3. Like all the rest. "He is just a common or garden monk."

he does not tell his monks the result, he cunningly suggests that he has found her out, in order to make a fool of them, for unless they become more foolish than they are already by birth they can never become clever.

In actual fact, the old woman's treating Jōshū in exactly the same way as the young monk, shows that her Zen was half-baked. If we love animals we know who loves them and who not, but if we don't, we can't distinguish one from another. If we understand the music of Bach we also know those who understand it, and those who only pretend to. But this is not the point of the story, which is, *how* do you look at those who pretend to like animals and like Bach and like Zen? The feeling of superiority in such a case is a passport to Hell, or rather, it is Hell.

## THE COMMENTARY

婆子只解坐籌帷幄，要且著賊不知。趙州老人，能用偷營劫寨之機，又且無大人相。檢點將來，二俱有過。且道那裏是趙州勘破婆子處。

The old woman just sat still in her tent and planned the campaign; she didn't know that there was a famous bandit who knew how to take the enemy commander prisoner. Old Jōshū was clever enough to steal into her camp and menace her fortress, but he wasn't a real general. Pondering over the matter, we must say that they both had their faults. Tell me now, what was Jōshū's insight into the old woman?

Jimbo makes the story more coherent, and the military metaphor continuous, by translating 著賊 not as "a famous robber," but as "taking prisoner the enemy general," that is, "the old woman did not know how



to take the enemy general (Jōshū) prisoner." In any case, Mumon says that the old woman could defeat the young monks who passed by, but did not dare go to the temple and attack a master. At the end Mumon says rightly enough that there is something a bit measly about Jōshū also, going sneaking round old women to see if their Zen was real or imitation. The impartiality of Mumon is miraculous.

## THE VERSE

問 既 一 般	答 亦 相 似
飯 裏 有 砂	泥 中 有 刺

The question is the same.  
 The answer is the same.  
 Sand in the rice,  
 Thorns in the mud.

The question Jōshū asked, "Is this the way to Tai-zan?" is the same that just all the monks asked. Her answer, "Straight ahead!" was the same for Jōshū as for the silliest monk. Jōshū's question, however, that looked like rice, had the sand of not-to-be-digested intellectual contradictions and paradoxes in it. What looked like mud, soft and easy, had in it the thorns of life upon which we fall and bleed.

From this Case we are to learn two things. First, not to do as Jōshū did, investigate other people's Zen. Second, not to do as the old woman did, fail to distinguish the real Zen from the false, especially not to "entertain angels unaware."

## Case XXXII

### BUDDHA AND THE NON-BUDDHIST

#### *Dramatis Personae*

The Buddha seems to me to have been an impressive but unattractive personality, something like Albert Schweitzer. His lack of humour, unprogressiveness, never-wrong-ness, unexcitability, anti-feminism, pedanticism, and unpoeticality are repulsive. In spite of, or because of his irritability, violence of thought and feeling, masochism and sadism, hatred of hypocrites and contempt for his half-witted and cowardly disciples, fear of death and doubt of God,—as I say, in spite of, or because of all these, I like Christ, I have a warm friendly feeling towards him. For Buddha, I feel nothing but the coldness with which he sits apart from humanity and me.

The Tirthyas or Tirthikas, 外道, are sometimes called heretics; “non-Buddhist scholars” is perhaps the meaning for this Case. The Jains, the adherents of the Sankhya philosophy, and of course Hinduists, and Brahmins are included. Those who taught the immortality of the soul, or its annihilation, or who had odd and abstruse views of the nature of karma,—such people were all *gedō*. Kapila is one of the best known “heretics.” He taught the liberation of the soul. Vandhamana, a contemporary of the Buddha, was the last prophet of the Jains, the traditional dates of his birth and death being 599 and 527 B.C. After twelve years of extreme mortification he spent the rest of his life teaching and organising. The doctrines of the Jains were.

1. Every material thing has a spirit in it, there being

- a universal dualism of mind and body.
2. There is no God.
3. A very complicated theory of knowledge in which only telepathy, that is knowledge of things distant in time or space, and perfect knowledge of perfect souls are infallible.
4. The teaching of ahimsa, no killing.
5. Nirvana is an escape from the body, not, as in Buddhism from existence (and non-existence).

Against these "heretical" views Buddhism has, for example, the Three Law Signs, 三法印: Non-permanence, 無常印, No-soul, 無我印, and Nirvana, 涅槃印. In various sutras there are accounts of the conversion by Buddha of the disciples of Vandhamana, but these are very different from the present Case. Ananda came before in Case XXII.

## THE CASE

世尊因外道問，不問有言，不問無言，世尊據座。外道贊歎云，世尊大慈大悲，開我迷雲，令我得入。乃具禮而去。阿難尋問佛，外道有何所證，贊歎而去。世尊云，如世良馬，見鞭影而行。

A Non-Buddhist said to the Buddha, "I do not ask for words; I do not ask for silence." Buddha just sat quietly. The Non-Buddhist said admiringly, "The compassion of the World-Honoured One has opened the clouds of my illusion, and has enabled me to enter on the Way." Making his salutations, he departed. Ananda then asked Buddha, "What was it this Non-Buddhist realised, that he so praised you?" The World-Honoured One replied, "A high-class horse moves at even the shadow of the whip."

Logic is necessary when we are attempting to be logical, but this Non-Buddhist philosopher was not

asking for logic. Thus when he requests Buddha to tell him something without speaking and without silence, and then Buddha is silent, he is not fool enough to object, and charge Buddha with not fulfilling his demand. He gets what he wants, not something which is not speaking (that is silence) or speaking (i.e. not silence) but a Way. This Way is something which the historic Buddha was scarcely able to expound. It took more than another thousand years before Daruma and Enō could point clearly to it. Further, in Buddha's thought, though not his experience, the world and the Way were divided,—in fact we escape from one, existence, to the other, Nirvana. Zen is going back to the world with the touchstone in your pocket, so that the object of life is being achieved when we see the things as they are, as bad as they can be and as good as they can be. This continuance of (our) suffering, Buddha relegated to the world, the flesh, and the devil. The continuance of (our) joy, Buddha kept for Nirvana, but Zen perceived that just as our joy and suffering are indivisible, so are Nirvana and the world, the absolute and the relative. Buddhism is thus always a duality, and Zen tends to fall into unity. This Way is what the Non-Buddhist received, not from the historical Buddha but from the Zen reunifying him with the world he rejected, so that the Buddha is not only the World-Honoured One but a shit-stick and three pounds of flax, and the magnolia tree in the garden, and all the might-have-beens and mistakes and nightmares of mankind.

The simile of the horse comes from the *Zō Agongyō*, 雜阿含經, where Buddha says there are four kinds of Bhiksu.

First there are horses that start<sup>1</sup> even at the shadow of the whip, and perform the will of the horseman. Then there is one that does this when the hair is touched, another when the flesh is touched, and lastly one when the bone is touched. The first horse hears of the impermanence of another village; and feels

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1. Literally, "is astonished and alarmed."

world-nausea; the second feels it when he hears of the impermanence of his own village; the third when he hears of the impermanence of his own parents; and the fourth when he experiences illness and pain himself.

What the story teaches is the importance, above that of Zen itself, of the imagination. The Non-Buddhist had the imaginative power to see into the Buddha's state of mind and body when he sat there silent. In this sense, the most important thing for a man who wishes to study Zen, something he must do before he begins it, and must do with his last dying breath, is to cultivate his imagination. With imagination we have already some idea of the meaning of, for example, "When Buddha sat, all things sat." The Buddha's silence was not what we call "an eloquent silence." He was not hinting at something difficult to say. He was not suggesting that the question was unprofitable, or that the absolute was beyond (the relation of) speech and silence. His sitting there was no different from his walking, or going to the lavatory. There was no separation from himself and a leaf of a tree in the forests of the Amazon, or the fingernails of Julius Caesar.

What was the Non-Buddhist's illusion that Buddha cleared up? "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." What was his enlightenment? "I and my cup are one."

As far as Ananda's childish question is concerned, some say he asked it for the sake of the other monks, others, Mumon among them, take it as a real enquiry on the part of Ananda.

## THE COMMENTARY

阿難乃佛弟子，宛不如外道見解。且道外道與佛弟子，相去多少。

Ananda was the Buddha's disciple, but his

understanding was nothing like that of the Non-Buddhist. Just tell me, what is the distance between disciples and non-disciples?

"What is the difference between....?" is a question Mumon likes to ask. It reminds one of the puzzle, "What is the difference between an elephant and a pillar box?" If you answer, "I don't know," the retort is "Then I won't ask you to post a letter!" Once more, what is the difference between a disciple and a non-disciple? The answer is that the disciple may be the less understanding and faithful of the two. But the real question is: What is the difference between an enlightened man and an unenlightened man? If we say none, this goes against common sense, and common sense means God's sense. If we say they are as different as chalk and cheese, this denies the Buddha nature and the Fatherhood of God. The answer is that you don't know the difference until you realise there is no difference,—then you know it. When you realise yourself to be no better than others, then you are better than others. But if you think this, you are not. Here is the paradox that rules the world; here is the driver with his whip; can you see the shadow?

## THE VERSE

劍刃上行	氷稜上走
不涉階梯	懸崖撒手

Walking along the edge of a sword;  
Running over jagged ice;  
Not using a ladder;  
Climbing precipices handleless.

Zen often uses the feats of conjurors and acrobats to express its mental-physical activities. Houdini, who

used to enter, manacled, into a great jar of water, had much more Zen than many people think they have. The ice of the second line is taken as "smooth ice," "frozen ice," and also as "thin ice," which last gives the best meaning. The word is 稜, which seems as if it will bear any of these.

"Walking along the edge of a sword" is what we do every day, without knowing it. Death hovers over us, **but** we walk along what we suppose, rightly enough, to be a broad highway. As soon as we think about it, over we go, spiritually at least. When we forget ourselves, forget Zen, completely, no ice is too thin to pass over, that is to say, *if it will bear us*, but when we consider the (intellectual) alternatives, we are drowned on dry land, starved to death in a land of plenty, in this case without any "if" at all.

Case XXXIII  
BASO'S NO BUDDHA

*Dramatis Personae*

The life of Baso has already been given in Volume III.

THE CASE

馬祖因僧問，如何是佛，祖曰，非心非佛。

A monk asked Baso, "What is the Buddha?" Baso answered, "Not mind, not Buddha."

The point of this Case is clear enough as it stands, but it gains in depth and interest if we look at the following from Baso-roku (the first three sentences comprise Case XXX).

Hōjō of Mount Daibai, when he first visited Baso, asked, "What is the Buddha?" Baso answered, "Your very mind. Hōjō became completely illuminated. Afterwards, hearing of his place of residence, Baso sent a monk there, who asked, "Hōjō, when you saw Baso, what was it you attained, so that you came to live on this mountain?" Hōjō replied, "Baso said to me, 'Your very mind,—that is the Buddha!' and that is why I came here." The monk said, "Recently Baso has changed." Hōjō asked, "How has he changed?" The monk answered, "Nowadays he says, 'No mind, no Buddha!'" "The old rescal!" said Hōjō. "He upsets and confuses people, but that is not the last of it. Though he may say, 'No mind, no Buddha!' I still say, 'Your very mind,—that is the Buddha.'" When the monk reported this to Baso, Baso said admiringly, "The many great plums<sup>1</sup> are already ripe."

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1. "Daibai" means "Great Plums."



There is an interesting coda to this:

Fugyūzai<sup>2</sup>, a disciple of Baso, ascended the rostrum and declared, "The mind is the Buddha,—this is the medicine for sick people. 'No mind, no Buddha',—this is to cure people who are sick because of the medicine."

This is very good. We think the Buddha is outside us. To cure this disease of false humility Baso gives us the medicine, "You are the Buddha." Then we suppose that we and the Buddha are the same thing, and become bumptious. To cure this, caused by the medicine, Baso tells us "No mind, no Buddha!" Going back to Case XXX, we have the following anecdote connected with the same disciple of Baso.

Fugyūzai took a letter to the National Teacher Chū<sup>3</sup>, who asked him, "What teaching have you from Baso?" Fugyūzai said, "Sokushin sokubutsu".<sup>4</sup> "What's the meaning of that?" said Chū, and remained quiet for a while. Then he asked, "Was there any other teaching?" "Hishin, hibutsu",<sup>5</sup> said Fugyūzai, and then added, "Hishin, hibutsu, himotsu."<sup>6</sup> Chū said, "This is a bit more clear." Fugyūzai said, "This is what Baso says; what do you think about it?" Chū said, "It's like the twisting of the water of a river<sup>7</sup>, like the sickle that mulberry trees are cut with."

## THE COMMENTARY

若向者裏見得，參學事畢。

If you understand what Baso said, your study of Zen is at an end.

2. Full name, 伊闕伏牛山自在.

3. This is Echū of Nanyō.

4. The mind is the Buddha. (The answer of Case XXX.)

5. Not mind, not Buddha. (The answer of the present Case.)

6. Neither mind, Buddha, nor thing. See page 232; cf. Case XXVII.

7. 三点流水.

Baso wants first to destroy our doubt, then to destroy our belief. Mumon, unlike a great many other writers, knows when to say little. Let us imitate him at least in this.

## THE VERSE

路逢劍客須呈	不遇詩人莫獻
逢人且說三分	未可全施一片

If you meet a master-swordsman in the street,  
give him a sword.

If you meet an unpoetical man, don't offer him  
a poem.

When you meet someone, tell him three quar-  
ters,

Don't on any account let him have the other  
part.

The first two lines are from an old Chinese saying. Baso teaches each person, according to his "condition", does not offer a drowning man a glass of water, or a vomiting person a chocolate meringue. The last two lines are also a proverbial saying. They do not imply any stinginess or self-protection from being misunderstood, but are the adaptation of means to ends. I myself am not so much in favour of upaya, 方便, expedient method, progressive revelation. In the case of Buddhism there is no evidence for the Mahayana claim that Buddha used upaya until his last days, when he revealed absolute truth. From the Zen point of view, it is impossible, and from the rational standpoint, as we see in the history of all religions, crude people teach crude ideas, and profound and sensitive people say profound and sensitive things at any time and in any place. What is called progressive revelation is simply

saying foolish things to clever people and clever things to foolish people, swords to the poets and poetry to the swordsmen. Buddha is this, Buddha is that, Buddha is not Buddha,—all this kind of talking, even when appropriate to the hearer, or rather, especially when appropriate to the hearer, has no connection with Zen. Thus do we outdo Mumon himself, thanks to his teaching. As Hamlet says, it is very pleasant to hoist the engineer with his own petard.

## Case XXXIV

### NANSEN'S NO WAY

#### *Dramatis Persona*

Nansen is the chap who loved his teaching more than cats.

#### THE CASE

南泉云，心不是佛，智不是道。

Nansen said, "The mind is not the Buddha; knowledge is not the Way."

The best commentary on this is Nansen's own, given in the *Sayings of Nansen*:

There are no words whatever in the Empty Kalpa.<sup>1</sup> But when a Buddha appears in the world, then words come into existence, and consequently we are attached to these forms of things.... Just because we are so attached to words we become limited, and lose our universal nature. The Great Way knows 'no wise man or foolish man, no saint or sinner. But when words and names exist, everything belongs to the finite. So the old master of Kōsei<sup>2</sup> says, "It is not mind, not Buddha, not things."

Another sermon by Baso, Nansen's teacher, which follows immediately on the sayings of Cases XXX and XXXIII:

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1. The last of the Four Kalpas.
  2. Where Baso lived.

The Primal Nature<sup>3</sup> is originally<sup>4</sup> sufficient. When there is no hesitating in anything, good or bad as it may be, there, we can say, is the man who disciplines himself in the Way. To choose good (naturally), and reject evil (instinctively), to meditate on the Emptiness of things, to enter into a state of samadhi,<sup>5</sup>—this is doing something. But the more we run after [these as] outward things, the farther away we get from them. We must exhaust every thought in the Three Realms,<sup>6</sup> for one illusory thought alone is the origin of life and death in these Three Realms. When we are in that thought-less state, that is, when we have put aside the origin of life and death we have gained the peerless treasure of the Law.

All this is really what Nansen calls "knowledge," and is not the Way. A way is something walked on, and when it is not being walked on, it is at best only a potential way. When we walk there is a way, and when we stop walking there is none. When we walk the Way, the Way exists, and not unless. What is walking the Way? It is movement, as said before, from one poetic point to another, and these "points" get stronger and yet more delicate as we move through them.

## THE COMMENTARY

南泉可謂，老不識羞。纔開臭口，家醜外揚。然雖如是，知恩者少。

Nansen, growing old, was lost to shame. Just opening his stinking mouth, he told others about the disgrace of his own house. However, we must say that few are grateful for it.

Mumon is speaking ill of Nansen, jokingly it is true,

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3. Self nature, innate constitution, inherent substance.

4. No temporal meaning implied.

5. Absolute wisdom.

6. Of desire, things, and abstractions.

but besides praising him for his kindness, for which few thank him, Mumon is also insinuating that Nansen talked too much, preached too much, spoke too philosophically, too unpoetically, too unparadoxically. He says this was due to his age. In some ways Chinese and Japanese are somewhat cruel to old people, or shall we say less sentimental than westerners. This no doubt comes from the Oriental real respect for age, just as Mumon's real respect for Nansen allows him to speak of his rotten teeth and bad breath.

## THE VERSE

天晴日頭出	雨下地上濕
盡情都說了	只恐信不及

The weather is fine, and the sun appears;  
Rain falls, and the earth becomes wet.  
With exceeding kindness he explains everything,  
But how few have faith in his words!

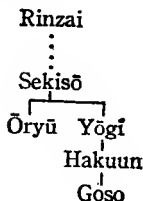
The reader will have noticed by this time Mumon's inveterate practice of writing something, and then rubbing it out, in case you should attach too much importance to this or that. At first this seems only perverse, or a bad habit, or a trick of writing, but after a while you realise that this comes rather from his central point of judgement. Not that he thinks that the truth lies between two extremes, that all religions have some good in them, and such sentimental stuff. Mumon's violent assertion or praise, followed immediately by equally violent denial or blame, is that of nature itself, so definite and yet so tolerant, Nature that instantly punishes our every mistake, and yet freely allows us to make another.

Why is our faith weak? Because of intellection. We climb a mountain, and when we reach the top, find we

have scored and scratched our arms and legs unwittingly on the way up. If we had been at home and someone had lacerated our limbs like that we should have roared with the pain. While we are climbing the mountain we have what Mumon calls "faith." While we are sitting at home we have what Nansen calls "knowledge," intellection. While we are climbing the mountain we have no mind, no Buddha. When we sit at home we scream for the Buddha to help us.

## Case XXXV

### GOSO AND SEI'S SOUL



#### *Dramatis Personae*

The name Goso, 五祖, which means 5th Patriarch, leads us to confuse him with the 5th Patriarch from Daruma, Gunin. What happened was this. Mount Ōbai, 黃梅山, was the place where Gunin, the 5th Patriarch, lived in the 7th century with seven hundred monks, including Enō. This mountain became known as Goso San, 五祖山, Fifth Patriarch Mountain. About four hundred years after this, in the 11th century, Hōen went there in the latter years of his life, and became known as Hōen of Gosozan, or briefly as Goso.

Goso, or Hōen, belongs to the Yōgi, 楊岐, branch of Rinzaï Zen. He was the spiritual father of Engo, the commentator of the *Hekiganroku*. Mumon was the 5th descendant of Goso. Hōen became a priest at the late age of thirty five, two years after the death of Secchō (d. 1052), the compiler of the *Hekiganroku*. He studied Buddhism deeply, but could not resolve his doubts. He went to several Masters, and at last to Hōon of Fuzan, 浮山法遠, who told him the Nyorai has a secret word which Kashō (the 2nd Patriarch from Sakyamuni) did not preserve. It is said that this resolved his doubts, whatever they were, and Hōen urged him to go to Shutan of Hakuun, 白雲守端. One day, Shutan was



dealing with a monk on Jōshū's Mu, and Hōen, who was listening, suddenly became enlightened. His Enlightenment Poem, 投機の偈, is the following:

At the foot of the hill a field lies in quietness.  
 Folding my hands, I say to the old man gently,  
 "Many and many a time you have sold this land and  
 bought it back again, haven't you?"  
 How graceful the pines and bamboos! Cool air blows  
 through them.

The connection between this excellent verse and Hōen's enlightenment is not easy to see; perhaps it lies somewhere deep down in the Chinese love of "the good earth."

After becoming head of several temples, he at last went to mount Goso, and lived there until his death at the age of eighty. Of the twenty four divisions of Zen which exist in Japan, Goso is responsible for no less than twenty of them, that is, all of them with the exception of the three divisions of the Sōtō Sect and the Ōryū division.

## THE CASE

五祖問僧云，倩女離魂，那箇是真底。

Goso asked a monk, "Sei's being separated from her soul,—which was the real person?"

The story of Sei's two souls comes in various Chinese books of ghost stories. There are several versions, but substantially the same. The best-known is in *Sentō Shinwa*, 剪燈新話, a collection of stories by Kuyū (Chuiyu) published in the Ming Period in four volumes. It came to Japan in the Tokugawa Era, and had a great effect on the literature of the time.

In a place called Kōyō lived a man, Chōkan, whose

youngest daughter, Sei, was very beautiful, and the pride of her father. He had a handsome cousin named Ōchū, and Chōkan as a joke used to say they would make a fine married couple. The two young people, however, took this chaffing seriously, and thought of themselves as engaged, being in love with each other. The father, however, intended to give her in marriage to another young man, Hinryō, and tragedy could not be avoided. Ōchū left the place in indignation by boat, and after several days journey in the boat, one evening he found, to his astonishment, that Sei was on the same boat. Overjoyed, they went to the country of Shoku where they lived several years, and had two children. Sei, however, could not forget her native place, and said she had deserted her father, and wondered what he was thinking of her. So her husband decided to go back together with her. When they arrived at the father's house, her husband apologised to the father for taking his daughter away from her home, and begged him to forgive them. "What is the meaning of all this?" exclaimed the father. "Who is this woman?" "This is Sei," replied Ōchū. "Nonsense!" said Chōkan. "Sei became ill and was in bed for several years. That's not Sei at all!" Ōchū went back to the boat, and there was Sei, and he brought her to her father's house. The Sei lying in bed, being told of this, when the Sei came from the boat, arose from her bed, went towards her and the two became one. Chōkan said that, after Ōchū left, his daughter never spoke, and lay there as if in a stupor. The soul must have gone from the body. Sei said that she didn't know her body was in the house. When she felt Ōchū's love, and saw him go, she followed him as in a dream, but after that she remembered nothing.

One thinks immediately of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, but there is a difference. In Stevenson, the personality is divided morally; in the Chinese story, "psychically."

The problem in this Case is not clear. Some commentators take the question to be that of two souls;

which was the true one? But this disregards the story, which tells us that Sei's body remained at home; her soul, from love of Ōchū, went and lived with him five years in another part of China. Thus what we have, strictly speaking, is a body, and its soul with another body. Goso's question seems to imply that there was another, sleeping soul that remained behind with the body, so that we get two persons, one with a material body and a super-spiritual soul, and another with a soul and a sort of sub-material body. The idea of many souls and bodies (materialisations) is common among primitive people, that is, among all the nations of the world in 1964. Goso's question is quite simple; of these two persons, which was the real one? He is not thinking about the soul and the body, for then he could not ask which is the true one. The problem is therefore just an interesting form of the question, which is the real one, life or death, I or the universe, past and present, good and evil, ugly and beautiful, enlightenment and illusion?

Another way of thinking about the problem, a more Buddhistic one, is to remember that dividing the soul into two is dividing nothing. "When one says 'I,' what he does refers to all the skandhas combined, or to any one of them, and deludes himself that that was 'I'."<sup>1</sup> But in the Mahāli Sūtra, Buddha takes the Zen point of view towards the problem here, as to whether the soul is the same as or different from the body. He says: "And I, Sirs, know thus and see thus. And nevertheless I do not say either the one or the other."

Western commentators are divided in their interpretation of this. Some say Buddha knew the answer, but would not give it for fear of being misunderstood. Others say he did not know the answer. Still others say that he did not know, and did not care, since the problem had no connection with morality, with practical life, his sole concern. All these answers are correct

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1. *Samyukta Nikaya* III, 30.

All answers are correct. All questions are correct. This is the Shakespearean, the Zen answer, which is neither correct nor not correct.

## THE COMMENTARY

若向者裏悟得真底，便知出殼入殼，如宿旅舍。其或未然，切莫亂走。驀然地水火風一散，如落湯螃蟹，七手八腳。那時莫言不道。

If you are enlightened concerning what real things are, you will know that we pass from one husk to another like travellers in a night's lodging-house. But if you are not enlightened, don't rush about wildly. Suddenly earth, water, fire, and air are separated, and, like a crab with its seven arms and eight legs in boiling water [you struggle!]. Don't say I didn't warn you!

In the first sentence Mumon seems to be referring to reincarnation, which is a Buddhist superstition like the Christian superstition of the immortality of the soul, and has nothing to do with Zen, which will say, like Thoreau in the boiling water, "One world at a time!"

Again, if the last part of the Commentary sounds too Calvinistic, take it non-temporarily. Just as the Kingdom of Heaven is among us and in us, so is the Kingdom of Hell. At this very moment, though we seem to be reclining in comfortable armchairs, sipping tea and discussing Buddhism with elegance and discrimination, we are, inside, at bottom, only like crabs in boiling water thrashing about with all our arms and legs. An earthquake, a toothache, a mad dog, a telephone message, —and all our house of peace falls like a pack of cards. Heaven means a state in which every possibility has been met, every bridge crossed. It is independent of tomorrow's newspaper or typhoid germs in the water,

We may go through life with not a single physical pain or loss, but the possibility of them, all the troubles that never happen, are ever-present. Their baleful eyes are fixed upon us, and when will they bite? This is our constant dread.

## THE VERSE

雲月是同	溪山各異
萬福萬福	是一是二

The moon among the clouds is ever the same;  
Valleys and mountains are in constant change.  
What a happy thing it all is!  
This is one, that is two.

The first two lines are something like an inversion of Wordsworth's

And that uncertain heaven received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

Movement and stillness, two and one, Sei at home, and Sei abroad, the absolute and the relative,—the moon and the mountains, which is the real one? The answer is, as before,

All that we behold  
Is full of blessings.

## Case XXXVI

### GOSO'S NO WORDS OR SILENCE

#### *Dramatis Persona*

Goso once more. Here is one of the sermons of his old age.

"Yesterday I found a certain passage, and I wondered if I should bring it up before all of you. But as I am an old man I have forgotten the whole thing in toto. For some time I thought, and it wouldn't come back to me. (For some time he remained silent, and then he said) I have forgotten. I have forgotten. (Then he added) There is a Mahayana dharani named "The Wise Enlightening King"; if you recite it, you remember what you have forgotten. (Then he repeated) *An-a-ro-roku-kei-sha-ba-ka*. (Clapping his hands he laughed loudly and cried) "I remember, I remember. 'If you try to find a Buddha, you can never see him. If you search for a Patriarch, you will never meet him. The sweet melon is sweet to the root, the bitter melon is bitter to the root'."

The sweetness of the sweet melon is all-pervading; the bitterness of the bitter one is in every particle of the plant. So with the Buddha or a Bodhisattva or a Zen master or Jack the Ripper or the Pleiades. It is not something to be separated from them.

#### THE CASE

五祖曰，路逢達道人，不將語默對。且道將甚麼對。

Goso said "When you meet a man of the Way on the way, do not greet him with words; do not greet him with silence; tell me, how will you greet him?"

Goso's question was not original with him, of course. It seems to have been used first by Shuzan, 926-933, a disciple of Fuketsu, Case XXIV. Mumon uses the question with Goso perhaps because Goso was especially fond of it.

When you meet an enlightened man you must not say to him, "Nice day, isn't it?" You must not ask him, "What is Zen?" or, "Has flea-powder the Buddha nature?" You must not be engrossed in deep thought and not notice him. You must not pass him, by pretending not to see him. What will you do?

Zen is said to be "No dependence on words," 不立文字, but it must be remembered that Zen is also "No dependence on silence," 不立默. We should take "no dependence" to mean rather "no separation," no separation from words or silence. In this sense, what Goso asks of us is neither possible nor desirable. When you are silent, be silent as Christ was silent before Pilate. When you speak, speak as God spoke to Moses, "I am that I am!"

Who are these 達道人, people who have attained perfection? Had Christ an ear for music? Did Buddha understand what poetry is? Was Confucius fond of animals? We may call them perfect, just as a cat or a snail or a leaf is perfect, though they have no ear for music, understanding of poetry, or love for animals. In this sense Charlie Chaplin was a master, and Michaelangelo, and Paganini. But a woman who has just lost her only child in death may be a master; how will you greet her? A surgeon at the operating table, Keats looking out of the window at the sparrow pecking in the gravel, these are masters.

## THE COMMENTARY

若向者裏對得親切，不妨慶快，其或未然，也須一切處著眼，

If you can answer Goso intimately, you are to

be congratulated on your genius; but if you can't, you must endeavour to look at every thing you come across.

This is Wordsworth's "looking steadily at the object," whether the object is in the mind or outside it. It is Milton's

And what thou livest—live well.

Emerson says, "Speak the truth, and a base man will flee from you," and Christ says, "Take no thought what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that hour." This "it" is the answer to Goso's problem.

## THE VERSE

路逢達道人	不將語默對
攔腮劈面拳	直下會便會

Meeting a master on the way,  
Do not use words, do not be wordless!  
Give him an uppercut,  
And as for understanding, he'll understand at once!

Hakuin said of the third and fourth lines "They are no good, too rough." The objection to these lines is that they are in bad taste, and bad taste means bad Zen, or rather, no Zen. Mumon is no doubt thinking that we are all cowards, especially of course the soldiers and executioners and policemen. To be ready to smack anyone's face, especially God's, is necessary, but it is equally necessary not to say so, at least in what is supposed to be a poem.

In the Auchinleck version of *Guy of Warwick*, Guy has a shield impenetrable to any sword. The giant has



a sword that belonged to Hercules, which, tempered in the River of Hell, can penetrate any shield or armour. The authors of the mediaeval metrical romances often put the hero in the same position as Shuzan does his monks. Interestingly enough, the hero's shield is penetrated, and the author's comment is: "This never happened before!"

## Case XXXVII

### JŌSHŪ'S OAK TREE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Jōshū came in I, VII, XXXI, and now for the last time. Here is one more anecdote from *Goke Shōjūsan*, 五家正宗讃 by Kisō.

When Jōshū visited Ōbaku, the latter, seeing him coming, shut the door of his private room. Jōshū thereupon threw a piece of burning wood into the Hall, and yelled, "Fire! Fire! Help! Help!" Ōbaku opened the door, and, seizing Jōshū, said, "Speak! Speak!" Jōshū retorted, "You are bending the bow after the robber has gone."

The spontaneity and wit and undefeatability of these two is remarkable. The last sentence means that Jōshū need not speak (to show his Zen). It is being manifested all the time.

#### THE CASE

趙州因僧問，如何是祖師西來意，州云，庭前柏樹子。

A monk asked Jōshū, "What did Daruma come to China for?" Jōshū answered, "The oak tree in the (temple) front garden."

The question, "What did Daruma bring to China and the world from India?" and, "What did Christ bring to Judea and the world from Heaven?" are very similar, but when for the answer we put the oak tree in the garden beside the lilies of the field, there is a great

difference. To these we may add the flower that Buddha is supposed to have held up before the congregation of monks (Case VI). Again, what was different in Christ's attitude of mind when he taught the disciples, "Our Father which art in Heaven," and when he pointed to the wild flowers? Let us transpose the words, and see how it feels. "Consider the Father, how he grows!" "Our Lily which art in Heaven!" and compare Masefield's lyric at the end of *The Everlasting Mercy*:

O lovely lily clean,  
O lily springing green,  
O lily bursting white,  
Dear lily of delight,  
Spring in my heart again  
That I may flower to men.

Where Buddhism and Christianity make their mistakes is not in experience, which is infallible, but in the analysis of it. This analysis affects the preceding experience and that is the (only) reason for its importance. Poetic and religious experience means SEEING SOMETHING (hearing, touching, smelling and so on are included in "see"). This experience is also of its own validity, and we are as certain of it as when we merely see something. But the moment we attempt, in either case to answer the question, "And WHAT did you SEE," or, "And what did you see?" all is confusion. Note that the question may, and should perhaps always be written, "Whom did what see? The confusion arises from the fact that what or who is seen is not separable (except in words and thought) from what or who sees, and the seeing is not separable from the thing seen. When "I" and the poetry or the truth, or my father, or the flower, or the oak tree are set against each other, both are meaningless. This is why Christ says, or John says for him, "I and my Father are one," "Ye shall be in me, and I in you," and so on. The trouble with Christians is that when they read "Christ

in you, the hope of glory," they understand it in all its literality and transcendentalism, but the moment they begin to explain it, it becomes a metaphor, and "in" which means "equals," is taken as "influencing."

The remarkable thing about this Case, which Mumon has abbreviated, is that the monk also makes the mistake of those who look for God outside themselves or inside themselves. The full account is as follows:

A monk asked, "What is the meaning of the First Patriarch's coming from the West?" Jōshū answered, "The oak tree in the front garden." The monk said, "Don't express it objectively!" Jōshū replied, "I do not do so." The monk said, "What is the meaning of the First Patriarch's coming from the West?" Jōshū replied, "The oak tree in the front garden."

"Objectively" means with reference to an objective mental projection regarded as reality. When Jōshū said, "The oak tree," when Buddha hold up the flower, when Christ pointed to the lilies, when Tōzan said, "Three pounds of flax, when Ummon said "A shit-stick,"—they were not dealing with external objects, any more than Hyakujō was speaking subjectively when, in answer to the question, "What is truth?" he answered, "Here I sit on Daiju Peak,"<sup>1</sup> or Christ when he declared, "I am the Light of the World," or Bashō when he wrote:

馬はくはく我を繪に見る夏野かな

The cob ambles slowly  
Across the summer moor:  
I find myself in a picture.

## THE COMMENTARY

若向趙州答處，見得親切，前無釋迦，後無彌勒。

If you grasp Jōshū's answer clearly and strong-

1. *Hekiganroku*, XXVI.

ly, there is for you no former Sakyamuni Buddha, or Maitreya Buddha to come.

Maitreya appeared already in Case XXV. He is the next Buddha to appear on earth.

When we know God, we don't need him any more than the fish needs the water or the bird needs the air. Expressed violently, this is, "If you meet a Buddha in the street, kill him!" Expressed gently, Dōshō<sup>2</sup> says:

The green bamboos are all the Nyorai;  
The melancholy yellow flowers,<sup>3</sup>—every one is Hannya.<sup>4</sup>

## THE VERSE

言無展事	語不投機
承言者喪	滯句者迷

Words do not express things;  
Phrases do not show the mind-movement.  
He who receives (only) words is lost;  
To stagnate with sentences is to be deluded.

*a terrible "dub" or "gla" strain*

Words do not express things. Words express words. Things are not expressed by words; things express things. A thing and its word are two aspects of one Thing-Word. A thing without a word is nothing. A word without a thing is nothing. The (movement of the) mind is not expressed by the body. The body expresses itself, just as the mind expresses itself. But the mind and the body are two aspects of one thing, as Blake said, and Lawrence tried to put into practice.

2. 1261-1331. A monk of the Rinzai Branch. He travelled all over Japan for thirty years.

3. Perhaps chrysanthemum.

4. Wisdom personified.

Jōshū said, "The oak tree in the front garden." These are words, and you must not take the words as pointing to the Truth. Or rather, let us say that words, like trees, all point, but not at Truth. The pointing is itself the Truth, just as the Name of God is God himself.

To explain with a sentence is wrong. The sentence is itself the Truth. The finger points to the moon. The finger is the reality, not the moon. The moon is just the means for the finger to point, which is the end. All this is not what Mumon says, and not quite what he means, but I have too much respect for Mumon and myself to suppose that he would disagree with me.

## Case XXXVIII

### GOSO'S COW

#### *Dramatis Persona*

Goso came several times before, see Cases XXXV and XXXVI.

#### THE CASE

五祖曰，譬如水牯牛過窓櫺，頭角四蹄都過了。因甚麼尾巴過不得。

A reddish-yellow cow passes by a window. The head and horns and the four legs go past. Why doesn't the tail too?

The first sentence is also translated or explained as, "A cow goes through a window." "A buffalo goes out of his enclosure to the edge of the abyss." "A great cow passes (by? through?) a latticed window." "A great cow passes by a window." "A cow passes through the door (of the cow-house)." "A cow gets out of a latticed window." However, all this makes no difference to the (intellectual) problem, which concerns the tail, not what the cow itself does.

There are said to be two possible sources of Goso's similitude. In the *Nirvana Sutra* it says:

It is like a cow which is not properly guarded and ravages someone's rice-seedling field....

The cow represents the Five Roots,<sup>1</sup> and some com-

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1. Faith, strenuousness, memory, meditation, and wisdom.

mentators apply this to the present Case, and make the head mean this and the horns that, the tail being the thinking which cannot cope with the relative-absolute. Another source is the *Ananda's Seven Dream Sutra*, 阿難七夢經, a Hinayana scripture in which Buddha explains seven dreams for Ananda's sake, all dealing with the future world. In this we have the following:

King Kiriki dreams of a great elephant shut in a room which has only a small window. However, he manages to get his great body out, but the little tail remains shut in.

The disciples of Sakya give up worldly things, they sacrifice themselves, and thus get out, but the desire for fame is shown by the little tail.

However, Inoue says that the story does not come in this sutra at all, but in the 佛說給孤長者女得度因緣經 in which we are told that King Kiriki had ten dreams in one night, one of which being the dream about the elephant and its tail, and which Buddha explains as representing the desires of the rich-young Brahmin men and women after his Entrance into Nirvana. In any case, the point of the story seems to be that the huge body of the animal, especially the elephant, gets out of the small window, but the disproportionately small tail (of the elephant) cannot get out. It is this kind of unreasonableness, often seen in dreams, which must have attracted Goso as having something of Zen in it.

This Case is the most troublesome of the forty eight. What is the tail that remains behind? Dōgen Zeiji says of it:

世の中は窓より出づる牛の尾の  
ひかぬにとまる心ばかりぞ

In this world,  
The cow's tail, that should come out  
From the window,  
Always remains behind,  
Unless we pull it like mad.



Hakuin Zenji wrote a *jakugo*<sup>2</sup> on this Case:

As usual, without discrimination,  
The moon before the window;  
Just a few blossoms of the plum,—  
And all is changed.

The plum-blossoms seem to correspond to the tail.

Inoue takes the tail to be a symbol of the sexual passion, 愛慾, which Buddha thought would be the great danger for his teaching. Asahina pooh-poohs the explanation as being far from Zen, and this is no doubt true, but what is the Zen view of the matter? What is it that remains to trouble Christ and Buddha and Eckhart and Daruma even after they have transcended the relative-absolute?

If we compare this Case with Case V, Kyōgen's Man-up-a-tree, and Case XX, A Man of Great Strength, we see that they present to the mind an insoluble problem, a kind of unproblem, because they cannot be solved by the intellect, to which indeed it is not presented.

We can't "think it over"; we must "act it over." But before and during and after the activity, thought never ceases. This is the Zen tail; but there are others. Just as Kannon has many hands to save, so the cow has a thousand tails. The most enlightened person has still weaknesses and blind spots, unresolved associations of ideas. These, it may be said, do not affect the will, where Zen works. This is not so. There is no single isolated activity called the will, any more than there is a certain specific state of mind to be called Zen. The strength of the chain which each person is, lies in the weakest link. Tennyson says:

It is the little rift within the lute  
That by and by will make the music mute,  
And ever widening slowly silence all.

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2. Short, pithy Zen comment.

We at last may throw it away, but Nature, expelled, always returns, through that same window. What is Nature? Nature is the tail. What is the tail? It is this very question, "What is the tail?" Nature, the cow, is always pressing onward, but nature (the tail) always remains behind. This is the meaning of the word atavism. And in a way, the tail is the best part, just as Wordsworth calls the child, "Thou best Philosopher!" "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." And this primitive fear, however it changes into the great body of the Christian doctrine of the love of God, is still fear.

The cow's tail is all that we cannot understand, all that we are incapable of. It is our desire to comprehend Zen, which belongs to the whole personality, with a part of it, the intellect. Only the whole can understand the whole, but this part, which is specifically human, and which has raised the insoluble problem, which is fated to try to accomplish this impossible task, has this destiny, to find out what its destiny is. The cow's tail, so to speak, pushes the cow from the dark cow-house through the window into the world of light and liberty, but itself, the questioning intellect, remains in its own darkness. This Case, the thirty eighth, should really have been put last, but perhaps this would have been a little too obvious. Christ has been crucified for us, Socrates drank poison, Buddha reduced himself to skin and bone for our sakes, but the tail is still there. What a happy thing it is!

## THE COMMENTARY

若向者裏顛倒著得一隻眼，下得一轉語，可以上報四恩，下資三有。其或未然，更須照顧尾巴始得。

If in regard to this, you are able, even when

in a hurry,<sup>3</sup> to fix your one eye<sup>4</sup> on it, and say a turning-word,<sup>5</sup> you will be able to repay the Four Obligations<sup>6</sup> and help the Three Bhava.<sup>7</sup> If you are still unable to do this, reflect again on the tail, and you can do it.

Mumon is not telling us how to get the tail through the window, for in this fable, or dream, such a thing is impossible. Thoreau writes in his *Journal*, 1840:

Make the most of your regrets; never smother your sorrow, but tend and cherish it until it comes to have a separate and integral interest. To regret deeply is to live afresh.

So Mumon tells us to meditate without ceasing on the cow's tail. *Salva mundi sicut est in mundo.*

What is the object of life? Mumon suggests that it is not to become enlightened, or to go to Heaven, or do the will of God, or create beauty, or discover truth, or love one's neighbour, or be happy; but to return good for good, and save all men from their sin of dichotomising. The first is Chinese; the second is what we may call, for once, Zen Buddhism. It is to the second that the tail belongs, for the tail is the hiatus between the Zen and the Buddhism, the real and the ideal.

3. Tendō, 顛倒, is variously explained as upside-down, pushing down, distorted, a scribal error, and so on.

4. Isseki gen, 一隻眼, or 頂門眼, or 正眼, or 明眼, means the eye, other than the two ordinary eyes, with which we see truth or beauty or goodness.

5. For turning word, 転語, see ante, page 166.

6. The Four Obligations are to one's parents, to people in general, to one's country, to Buddha, to the Law, and to priests.

7. The Three Bhava, 三有, Three Existences, or Three Realms, 三界, of desire, form, and beyond form, are in effect all living creatures.

## THE VERSE

過去墮坑塹      回來却被壞  
者些尾巴子      真是甚奇怪

If the cow goes through, it will fall into a ditch;  
If it goes back it will be destroyed.  
This little bit of a tail,—  
What a marvellous thing it is!

The commentators are all at sixes and sevens about this verse. Inoue says it is not the cow, but the tail, the remaining passion that will cause the man to fall into Hell. Jimbo says the first line refers to falling into the error of Emptiness, the second line to the mistake of Materialism. The other commentators are more than usually swindling. Perhaps we may take the verse as proposing Mumon's usual alternatives, of which we can choose neither, with the tail still wagging in the last two lines. The conclusion of the whole matter would then be this. We have to live between the relative and the absolute, in both at the same time. This can be done, and is done, in so far as we really live at all. But in spite of this, and in addition to this, there is the everlasting why, the eternal whither, the ever-to-be-asked and never-to-be-answered Question.

## Case XXXIX

### UMMON AND A MISTAKE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Ummon came before, in Case XV, Ummon's Thirty Strokes; Case XVI, Ummon's Robes; Case XXI, Ummon's Shit-stick. Here we have also Shishin, and, by proxy, Chōsetsu. Shishin, of the Ōryū branch of Rin-zai Zen, was the spiritual son of Maidō Soshin, 1025-1100. After travelling all over the country he settled down, and was very active in propagating Ōryū Zen. The account of his enlightenment with Maidō is as follows:

Maidō thrust out his fist, and said, "Call it a fist and you reject its spiritual reality. Not to call it a fist is to deny the fact. What do you make of it?"

It took Shishin two years to answer the question. Chōsetsu Shūsai, the author of the verse that the monk begins to quote, was enlightened by Sekisō,<sup>1</sup> whom he visited at the instance of Zengetsu Daishi.

Sekisō said to Chōsetsu, "What is your name?" Chōsetsu answered, "My family name is Chō, my own name is Setsu. Sekisō said, "It is useless to seek skill; where did Setsu come from" At this, Chōsetsu was suddenly enlightened.

He expressed his enlightenment in the following verse:

The radiance shines serenely throughout all the multitudinous worlds;  
Wise and foolish, living creatures,—they are all my dwelling-place.

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1. See Vol. II, pages 82 ff.

When no thought (of desire or loathing) arises, ultimate reality is completely manifested.

If the six sense-organs<sup>2</sup> are even a little active, clouds divide us from truth.

If we cut off all worldly passions, all the more our spiritual sickness increases.

Even if we plan to grasp Eternal Truth, this also is wrong.

Following worldly relations does not affect the real person.

Both Nirvana and life-and-death are no other than flowers of the mind.<sup>3</sup>

The first four lines are the relative, common sense. The second four are paradoxes of truth.

## THE CASE

雲門因僧問，光明寂照遍河沙，一句未絕，門遽曰，豈不是張拙秀才語。僧云，是。門云，話墮也。後來死心枯云，且道那裏是者僧話墮處。

A monk once asked about "The radiance shines" and so on, but before he could finish the first line Ummon interrupted him, and said, "Aren't these the words of Chōsetsu Shūsai?" The monk replied, "Yes, they are," Ummon said, "You made a slip of the tongue." Afterwards, Shishin brought the matter up, and said, "Tell me, how did the monk make a slip of the tongue?"

The "slip of the tongue," 話墮, is the problem of this Case. Jimbo takes it as "hackneyed," and there seems to be a general consensus of opinion that Christ should not have quoted from the Old Testament or Confucius from the Book of Songs. What was wrong with the

2. The five senses and the discriminating mind.

3. Illusions.

monk was not his quoting, somewhat pretentiously, a Zen verse, but the fact that he was born at all. Ummon, like many but not all clever people, was short-tempered, and squashed the monk, perhaps for ever. Ninety nine percent of the people in churches and temples should have the same treatment. They should be in pinball parlours and music-halls, and then no one will want to tease them.

Emerson says that it is as difficult to appropriate the words of another as to write them in the first place. The great fault of men, to parody Mencius, is that they are exhibitionists. The monk intended to show off his enlightenment, and of course demonstrated the opposite. The words are the man, and though all language is of its nature imitative, each word we speak must be invented anew. Thoreau says, thinking of Ummon, and not the monk:

The words of some men are thrown forcibly against you, and adhere like burs.

## THE COMMENTARY

若向者裏見得雲門用處孤危，者僧因甚話墮，堪與人天爲師。若也未明，自救不了。

If in regard to this episode you have grasped Ummon's unapproachable method, and know how the monk made his slip of the tongue, you are in a position to be a teacher of men and gods, but if you are not yet clear about it, you have not even saved yourself.

A teacher is an empty man, empty of cant, of unimportant "world events," of desiring and abhorring, of his own (and other's) profit and loss. What does he teach? He communicates his own emptiness. He empties other people, in the perhaps foolish belief that,

When the half-gods go  
The Gods arrive.

However, saving ourselves first and then other people is like the man who practises an E major sonata without the sharps, and then puts them in when he can play it perfectly. To save others is to save ourselves; to save ourself is to save others,—not only in some mysterious, transcendental, mystical I-am-you way, but because to teach is to learn and to learn is to teach.

### THE VERSE

急流垂釣	貪餌者著
口縫纜開	性命喪却

Angling in a swift stream,—  
Greedy for the bait, he is caught!  
You have only to open your mouth,  
And your life is lost!

“The swift stream” is said to refer to the suddenness of Ummon’s interrupting the monk in his quotation. “Greedy for the bait” refers to the monk’s anxiety to be enlightened, which, being too great, results in frustration. Here is the necessity of what Bashō in his later years called *karumi*, lightness, a kind of humour, or smiling. Love without humour begins and ends in tragedy, as Shakespeare clearly shows us, but Zen without humour! Here is a stink indeed.







CASE XL

Isan Overturning the Pitcher, ascribed to Kano Motonobu.

## Case XL

### ISAN'S BOTTLE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Hyakujō, famous for his "no working, no eating" has appeared in Case II. When Isan, 771-819, was born, Hyakujō was fifty two. When Hyakujō died, at the age of ninety four, Isan was 44.

One day Isan was in Hyakujō's room, and was asked by the master, "Who are you?" "Reiyū,<sup>1</sup>" he replied. Hyakujō said, "Just rake in the fire-place and see if there are any embers." Reiyū did as he was told, and said, "There aren't any." Hyakujō himself got up, and, raking deep down, brought up a small burning ember. He held it up and showed it to Reiyū, saying, "Isn't this a live one?" Reiyū was suddenly enlightened. He prostrated himself and expressed his (new) understanding of things.

Hyakujō told him that true enlightenment is the same as illusion, remembering the same as forgetting, sages the same as fools. Reiyū remained with Hyakujō twenty years. Upon Hyakujō's death at ninety five, Reiyū went to Mount Isan as the master of its temple. Kyōzan of Case XXV, Kyōgen of Case V, and Reibun, who gained fame at his enlightenment from the plum blossoms, were among his disciples.

Karin, the head monk and the booby of the story, was, like Hyakujō, a disciple of Baso, and it is odd that such a man should have disgraced himself so conspicuously. Perhaps there is some exaggeration, as also in the poem-contest of Enō and Jinshū. After he left

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1. Isan became his name after living at Mount Isan, the temple there.

Hyakujō's temple he lived by himself. He was visited once by Haikyū, a scholar connected with the Ōbaku Branch of Zen. It was he who collected Ōbaku's *Den-shin-hōyō*, and wrote a preface for it. Haikyū said to Karin, "You have no attendants?" "Yes, I have two, but I can hardly show them to visitors." "Where are they then?" At this Karin shouted, "Daiku! Shōku!" and, to the amazement of Haikyū, two great tigers came out from behind the temple. Karin said to them, "We have a visitor, so go back." The two tigers roared, and went off again. But from this rather doubtful-sounding anecdote comes the fact that a Zen attendant monk is called *nikū*, 二空, two Emptinesses, also written 二虎, two tigers. *Nikū* also means meat, 肉, which tigers eat. (There are two Emptinesses, 人空, or 我空, or 性空, the human idea of Emptiness; and 法空, or 相空, the objective Emptiness).

## THE CASE

滙山和尚，始在百丈會中，充典座。百丈將選大滙主人。乃請同首座對衆下語，出格者可往。百丈遂拈淨瓶置地上，設問云，不得喚作淨瓶，汝喚作甚麼。首座乃云，不可喚作木楔也。百丈却問於山，山乃擡倒淨瓶而去。百丈笑云，第一座輸却山子也。因命之爲開山。

When Isan was with Hyakujō he was the *tenzo*.<sup>2</sup> Hyakujō wanted to choose a master for Mount Daii, so he called the head monk<sup>3</sup> and the rest of them, and told them that an exceptional person should go there. Then he took a water-bottle, stood it on the floor, and asked a question. "Don't call this a water-bottle, but tell me what it is!"

2. One of the six classes of monks in office, 六知事, who looks after the food.

3. *Shuso*, also *jōza*, 上座. Here it is Karin.

The head monk said, "It can't be called a stump." Hyakujō asked Isan his opinion. Isan pushed the water bottle over with his foot. Hyakujō laughed, and said, "The head monk has lost." Isan was ordered to start the temple.

The "water-bottle," 淨瓶, pronounced *jinbin* in the Rinzai Branch, and *jōbyō* in the Sōtō Branch, was one article of the priests' essential equipment<sup>4</sup>. In India there were two kinds, one a sort of basin, the other a chamber pot. In China it was made of brass or hollowed wood, and used for a carrying drinking water, like a modern canteen or flask.

There are many explanations of 木楔, a piece of wood, the stump of a tree, a wedge, a wooden clog something like the Japanese geta. It must be rather like a water-vessel in shape, and yet very different from it in use; a stump of a tree seems suitable from this point of view.

All actions from reality, that is, Zen activity, are free; not random or capricious, but proceeding from an inner necessity invisible to others, but seen as inevitable by those who intuitively perceive the steadiness, the perfection, the appropriateness, the no-other-possible-ness-under-the-circumstances. Cherry blossoms, like a giraffe's neck, a gumboil, or a musical theme, have a certain completeness, satisfactoriness in themselves, and at the same time move towards something else. The tipping over of the water bottle, in a dancing way, 廻, has this same inevitability, like Jōshū's putting his sandals on his head, and Tōzan's saying, "Three pounds of flax." To suppose that Isan pushed aside the water-bottle as foolish and irrelevant would be to make the greatest possible mistake, greater than Karin's even. The action is the answer, just as the flower is the answer to the branch.

4. See page 81.

We may ask one or two difficult questions. Why did not Isan bow to the water bottle? It had the Buddha nature, no less and no more than Buddha himself. The answer is that there would have been too much religiosity about such an action. Breaking it or kicking it over would have been too rough. Drinking the water in it would be too commonplace. Also, one may say, though it would not please the zennists, Isan's action was quite symbolical in a Freudian way, and this, though not essential, is all to the good.

The other question is more difficult. What would Isan have done the second time? I once grumbled, to a monk, at the Rōshi's telling the same joke at every lecture, until I just waited all through it to see if the joke would be repeated. The monk said to me, "You should laugh every time he tells the story." Perhaps I should, but I can't, and anyway, every time the same question is asked it must have a different answer. The point of this second problem is not so much what Isan should or would do on a second, similar occasion, when the bottle was placed there on the floor, as to emphasize the fact that though every Zen action is perfect, when it is repeated it must be more perfect, (a verbal impossibility which itself has some Zen in it). "Look before you leap" is not a Zen proverb, nor is, "Look while you are leaping," or, "Look after you have leaped." It is Mussolini who said to the British ambassador, when their motor-car had run over a child, "Never look back!" We must never look back, it is true, never look forward "and pine for what is not," never look at what we are doing at the moment, but always look back-now-forward.

## THE COMMENTARY

滙山一期之勇，爭奈跳百丈圈圍不出。檢點將來，便重不便輕。  
何故聲。脫得盤頭，擔起鐵枷。

Isan was a valiant man of the time,<sup>5</sup> but he could not spring out of Hyakujō's trap.<sup>6</sup> Comparatively speaking, Isan leaned towards the difficult, and away from the easy. Why do I say this? Because he removed the towel from his head<sup>7</sup> and put on an iron cangue.

"Not jumping out of Hyakujō's trap" means that Isan allowed himself to be chosen as the master of a large temple, which is choosing the "heavy" instead of the "light." The universe is always trying to trap us into truth, into being enlightened, into showing our courage, our quick-wittedness, our Zen. Mumon says, with cosmic irony, that Hyakujō tricked Isan into showing his practical transcendence, his water-bottle wisdom. This is a kind of humour we find in Swift, but seldom elsewhere.

## THE VERSE

颯下箴簾并木杓  
百丈重關攔不住

當陽一突絕周遮  
脚尖趯出佛如麻

Tossing away the bamboo utensils, and the wooden ladle,<sup>8</sup>

Isan immediately cuts off obstructions.<sup>9</sup>

The barrier Hyakujō set up for Isan did not stop him;<sup>10</sup>

5. Inoue explains 一期 as "whole-hearted."

6. Also interpreted as "door," a bent stick, a rope, compasses.

7. 盤頭 is also explained as kitchen utensils, or crockery, which Isan would use.

8. In the kitchen from which he was called.

9. This is also interpreted as eloquent circumlocution.

10. The water-bottle, and the problem of what to call it.

- { With his feet he overturns the Buddha like flax.<sup>11</sup>  
{ The tips of his feet radiate the Buddha like flax.<sup>12</sup>

This verse is difficult in the parts, but easy in the whole. Mumon is praising Isan for his defeat of Karin, who spoke when he should have acted. The first of the two translations of the last line means that when Isan kicked over the bottle he kicked over the universe, and of course the Buddha who is the essence of it. The second translation means that the feet of Isan which turned over the bottle emit rays of light, a kind of foot-halo, as innumerable as the flax seeds.

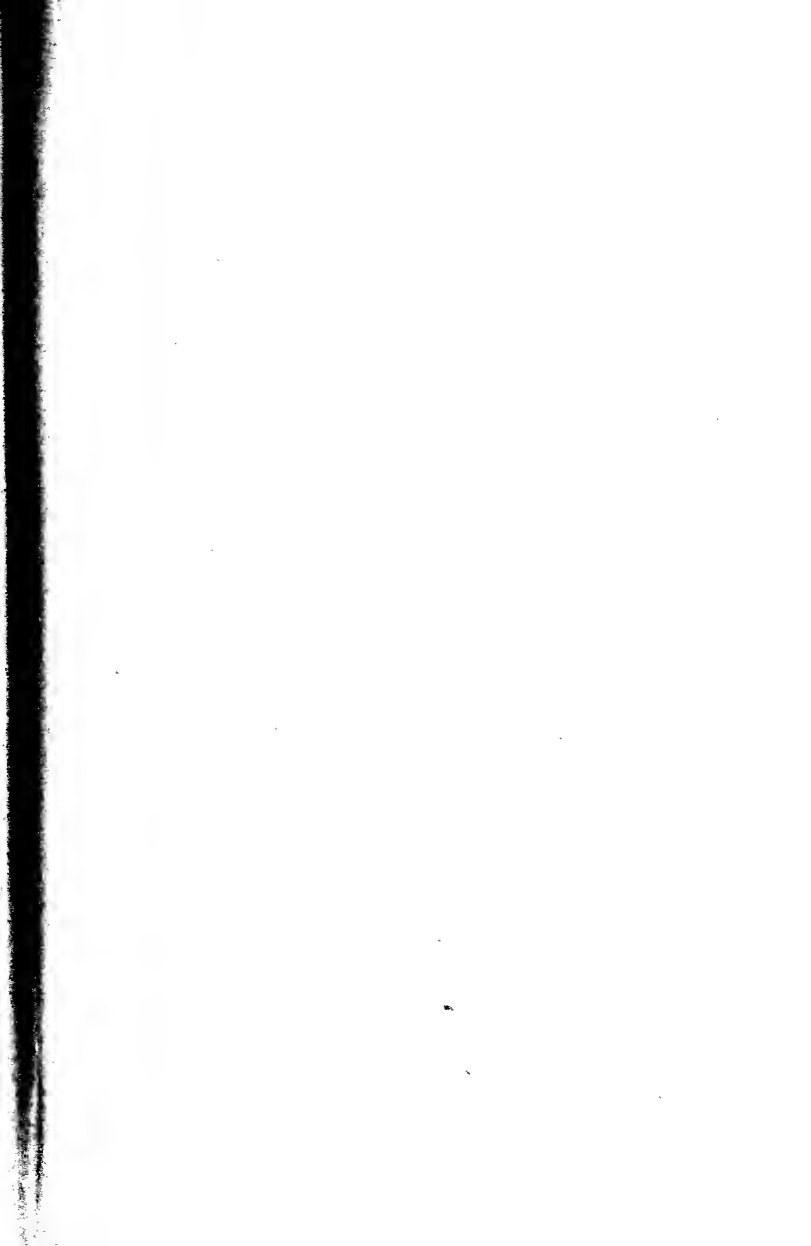
I would like to add one more discordant note to Mumon's discords, discords so much more pleasing to a real musician's ears than harmony or melody. There is in this Case a little too much of the survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence, winning and losing, the weaker to the wall spirit. I myself prefer Karin in his solitude with Big Ku and Little Ku, to the bottle-kicking head of the great temple.

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11. Flax is all confused.

12. The seeds of flax are innumerable.







## CASE XLI

Daruma, by Hakuin

The inscription says:

Seeing into one's Nature is 'being Buddha.

## Case XLI

### DARUMA'S MIND-PACIFYING

#### *Dramatis Personae*

The date of Daruma's coming to China is variously given as 520, 516, 470, and 527. Said to have been the son of a king in Southern India, he arrived at Canton with his begging bowl, and settled at Loyang, where he sat wall-gazing for nine years, becoming known as the wall-gazing Brahman, though actually he belonged to the ruling and military class. The cave where he sat becomes Shōrinji Temple. He is said to have died at the age of a hundred and forty or fifty, some say by poison, some that he returned to India. The *Meditation on the Four Acts*, 四行觀, ascribed to Daruma, is very clear in its teaching though not yet specifically Zen, the Zen that we find in the Platform Sutra, *Rokuso-dangyō*. The four acts are first 報冤行, The Requital of Hatred, not only the hatred of people but of all things around us, the sharp corner of the table, for example. Second, 隨緣行, Following Circumstances, which means, "He who would be first among you,—let him be servant of all." Third, 無所求行, Asking for Nothing, which is, "Not my will, but Thine be done!" Last, 稱法行, Accordance with Reality, which means the realisation that just as things have no self-nature, neither have we (and just as each thing has existence-value, so have we).

The Second Patriarch, Eka, 486-593, had a miraculous conception when a strange radiance appeared, from which he received the name of light, 光. When young, he studied the classics, and loved to walk among the mountains and forests. Afterwards he studied the teachings of the Hinayana and Mahayana, and became

a monk. After another mysterious communication from a spirit, he became known as "Spirit Light," 神光. Hearing of the advent of Daruma at Shōrinji, he went there again and again until he attained his desire, as described in the present Case. Becoming Daruma's disciple, he received the following injunctions: 1. Outwardly, cut off all relationships, 2. Inwardly, do not pant after things. 3. The heart must be pure, level, straight, equal, like a plaster wall. 4. Thus you may enter the Way.

It is said that Eka was with Daruma six or seven years. After Daruma's death, he transmitted the Law to Sōsan, the 3rd Patriarch. Then he lived (like Christ with the tax-collectors and wine-bibbers) with the people of ginshops and slaughterers, talking in the streets and market-places and making friends with the very lowest. When asked why he did such a thing, he answered, "Why do you trouble yourself with other people's affairs? I do this for the sake of my soul". He lived like this for thirty years. One day he began to preach in front of a temple, and the people collected to hear him, and even those in the temple itself, where a priest, Benwa, 辨和, was giving a sermon on the Nirvana Sutra. Benwa was so incensed at this that he trumped up a charge against him and had him executed. This story, no doubt a combination of epic and romance, reminds us of early Methodism, and the Salvation Army.

## THE CASE

達磨面壁。二祖立雪，斷臂云，弟子心未安，乞師安心。磨云，將心來爲汝安。祖云，覓心了不可得。磨云，爲汝安心竟。

Daruma sat facing the wall. The Second Patriarch, having cut off his arm, stood there in

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1. This is what we find two thousand years before in the *Hokku-kyō*, 法句經.

the snow. He said, "Your disciple's mind has no peace as yet. I beg the Teacher to give it rest." Daruma replied, "Bring your mind here and I will give it rest." The Patriarch said, "I have searched for that mind, and have not found it." Daruma said, "Then I have put it to rest."

Mumon has abbreviated the case here, almost to incomprehensibility to anyone reading it for the first time. The account given in the *Dentōroku*, however, is detailed to the point of incredibility. It tells us that Eka stood there in the snow on December the 9th until the falling snow reached his knees and then, Daruma taking compassion on him (if he had not it would have reached his ears) asked what he wanted. Eka, with tears running down his face said this and that, and Daruma said this and that, and then Eka cut off his left arm with a sword and laid it before Daruma, and Daruma said this and that, and then we have the present Case. It is not recorded what they did with the arm; Grendel's was stood up against the wall of the Hall.

There is an odd similarity between the transmission-enlightenment of the first three patriarchs from Daruma:

Sōsan : "Cleanse me from my sins"

Eka : "Bring them here and I will cleanse you."

Sōsan : "I have sought for them, but could not find them."

Eka : "Then I have cleansed you."

Dōshin: "Open the gate of release for me!"

Sōsan : "Who has constrained you!"

Dōshin: "No one constrains me."

Sōsan : "Then why do you ask for release?"

The interesting point about the present Case is the way in which the quietism and negativism of early Zen,

which was still Indian-flavoured, changed to activism and positivism from the Sixth Patriarch, who told Emyō to find his real nature,<sup>2</sup> his nature before he was born. Not to be able to find the self, and to be able to find the Self, is the same thing; also it is of course different.

## THE COMMENTARY

缺齒老胡十萬里，航海特特而來。可謂是無風起浪。末後接得一箇門人，又却六根不具。噢。謝三郎不識四字。

The broken-toothed old foreigner crossed the sea importantly from a hundred thousand miles away. This was raising waves when there is no wind. Daruma had only one disciple, and even he was a cripple. Well, well!

"Raising waves where there is no wind" is a favourite expression in Zen, signifying that there is no problem of life. Things are as they are, and as they are becoming, and once you realise this in its active, not resigned, meaning, there is nothing really to worry about. Further, our ordinary way of thinking about life in general is like an in-growing toe-nail. And last, the Buddhas and the Patriarchs of Zen are doctors who cause the disease they pretend to cure. So, since this is the best of all possible worlds, why all this fuss about Daruma and Eka and the *Mumonkan*? From this comes Ikkyū's famous *dōka*:

Since that mischievous creature  
Called Sakya  
Was born in to this world,  
How many, many people  
Have been befooled!

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2. See page 170 ff.

Zen has much in common with Panglossism, but this is balanced by the abuse of Buddha and the Patriarchs. In Western culture we find this freedom only in the history of the Rationalists, where it has almost always been accompanied by a complete lack of poetry, not to speak of religious feeling. Almost the best thing about Zen is the way in which it releases in us both the freedom of the radical and the faith and devotion of piety.

On the last sentence Katō spends four pages, which I summarise here. Some commentators take it to mean, "Bill Brown can't read the date on coins," Shasanro being a common name. Others, "The stupid fisherman doesn't know the character 四 (though he knows the 三 in his own name)." According to Inoue, 謝三郎 refers to Gensha<sup>3</sup>, whose surname was Sha, 謝, 三郎 being his first name, who became eventually a disciple of Seppō. One day Seppō said to Gensha, "Why don't you go round (interviewing the masters)?" Gensha answered, "Daruma did not come to the Eastern Kingdom, the Second Patriarch did not go to the West." This became famous in the Zen world, and establishes a connection between Gensha and the present case. It should be noted that this is a rather watery commentary, with Daruma crossing the sea, waves being raised without wind, and the fisher-monk Gensha. Donkū says that the four words are the Four Statements of Zen. Others again say it means 祖師西來, these four characters, that is, the meaning of the First Patriarch's coming from the West.

## THE VERSE

西來直指 - 事因囑起  
撓聒叢林 元來是你

Coming from the West, and direct pointing,—

3. See Vol. II, pages 50 ff.

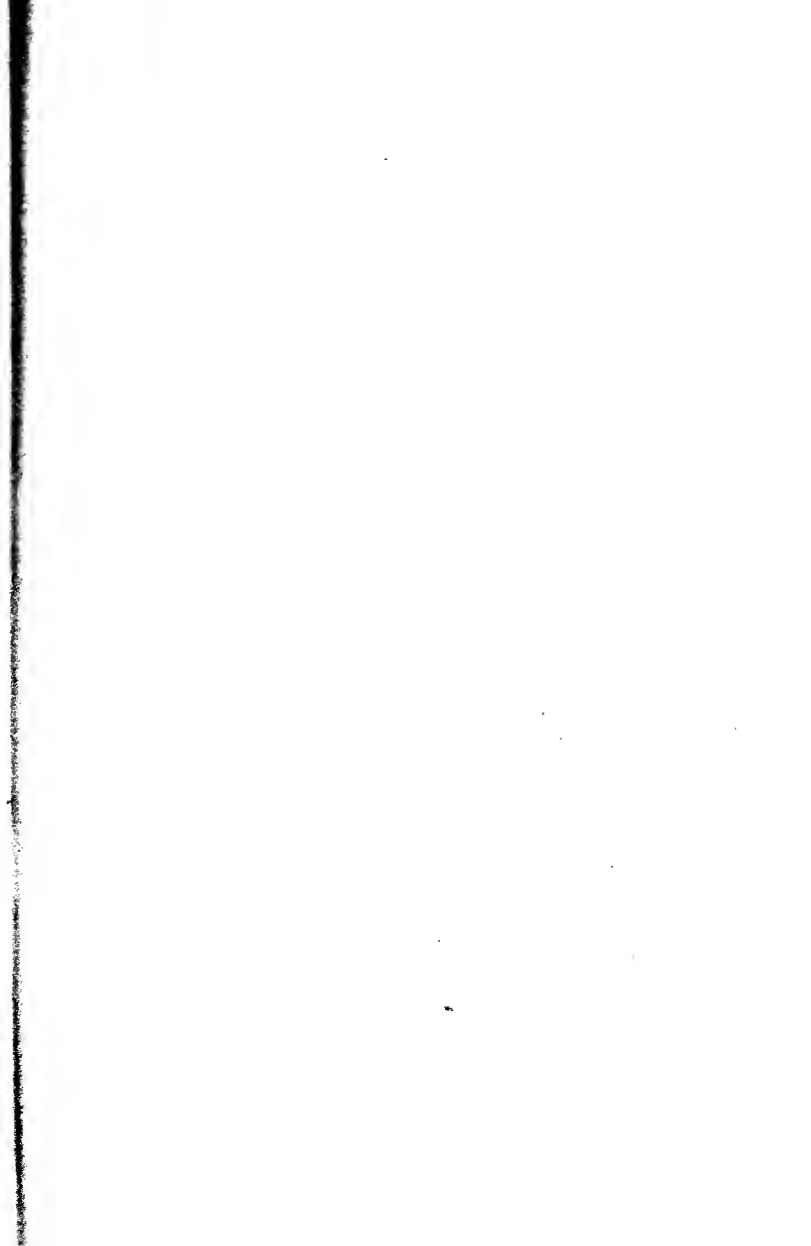
All the trouble comes from this!

The jungle of monks being all at sixes and  
sevens

Comes from these two chaps.

Many people have believed in all seriousness what Mumon says jokingly, that religion has been a curse to humanity. However, man is a religious animal, just as he is a cowardly, brave, wise, foolish, patient, irritable animal. Further, just as we cannot have peace without (the possibility of) war, so we cannot have religion without irreligion, or, as the Verse above says, all the problems of the meaning of Daruma's coming from the West, and pacifying Eka's mind, and not finding that mind, or finding the Mind,—all these things come from inanition and Buddhist peace and animal apathy. Thus Mumon's irony is justified in that Zen, though the greatest creation of mankind, is at the same time its growing pains, the inadvertent but inevitable cause of religious mania, masochism, persecution, fruitless asceticism and other less agreeable things in human history.







CASE XLII

## Case XLII

### BUDDHA AND THE LADY

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Buddha appears frequently in the *Mumonkan*, in a way quite unexpectedly often, for we forget that Zen is supposed to be a sect of Buddhism. In the story which forms the Case, we can hardly take Sakyamuni as the historical founder of a religion, nor Manjusri as the monk attendant upon him. Manjusri is the personification of wisdom, probably an actual person idealised. In pictures he is often found on Sakyamuni's left, with Samantabhadra on the right. He frequently has (permanent) waves in his hair representing the Five Wisdoms, 五智, as explained by the Shingon Sect. He holds the sword of wisdom in his right hand, and a blue lotus in his left. Sometimes he sits on a lion. He is both the head of the Bodhisattvas and the chief disciple of Buddha.

The name of the lady is given as Rii, 離意, literally, "Separated from will, or consciousness," in the sutra from which the story comes, *The Collected Essentials of All the Buddhas Sutra*, 諸佛要集經.

Mōmyō Bosatsu seems to be an invention of the originator of the kōan. The name given in the sutra is Rishoongai Bosatsu, 離諸陰蓋菩薩, literally, "Throwing away all the Shadowing Coverings Bosatsu."

#### THE CASE

世尊昔因文殊至諸佛集處，值諸佛各還本處，惟有一女人，近彼佛坐，入三昧，文殊乃白佛云，何女人得近佛坐，而我不得，佛告文殊，汝但覺此女，令從三昧起，汝自問之。文殊還女人三匝，

鳴指一下，乃托至梵天，盡其神力，而不能出。世尊云，假使百千文殊，亦出此女人定不得。下方過一十二億河沙國土，有罔明菩薩，能出此女人定。須臾罔明大士從地湧出，禮拜世尊。世尊勅罔明。却至女人前，鳴指一下。女人於是從定而出。

Once, in ancient times, Manjusri went into the presence of the World-Honoured-One where all the Buddhas assembled, but they had all departed to their original dwelling-places. A single woman was there, close to Buddha's throne, in the deepest meditation. Manjusri said to the Buddha, "How is it that this woman is so close to your throne, and I cannot be?" The Buddha spoke to Manjusri and said, "You may awaken this woman from her deep meditation, and ask her yourself how this can be." Manjusri walked round her three times, snapped his fingers once, (and could not wake her, so he) took her up to the Brahman Heaven, and practised all his magic art upon her, but could not bring her out of her deep meditation. The World-Honoured-One said, "Even a hundred thousand Manjusris could not get her out of her concentrated condition. But down below, past twelve hundred million countries, as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges, there is a Bodhisattva named Mōmyō. He will be able to awaken this woman from her profound meditation." Thereupon Mōmyō emerged out of the earth, and bowed to the World-Honoured-One, who told him what he wanted him to do. Mōmyō went before the woman, snapped his fingers once, and at this she came out of her meditation.

When we come to this case, we have a strange sensa-

tion, as if of levitation. We breathe Indian instead of Chinese air. All the figures are insubstantial, but larger than life, symbols rather than persons. But Zen can subsist here too, in the abstract as well as the concrete, the phantasmal as well as the biological. The hero of the Case is named 罔明, which is equal to 無明, unenlightenment. As said before, his original name, his name in the sutra, means throwing away all the shadowy coverings, that is, worldly passions and intellectual entanglements; in a word, it means enlightenment. Mōmyō means the exact opposite, unenlightenment. This changing of the name illustrates perhaps the whole history of the development of Mahayana Buddhism, the gradual realisation that without illusion and bondage there can be no enlightenment and release, and the further Zen discovery of the seemingly paradoxical and mystical but really only commonsensical fact that illusion is, without any change, enlightenment, the ordinary man is, as he is, the Buddha. As far as the woman is concerned, we may imagine that the writer of the sutra (clearly not Buddha himself, even as a story-teller) had a very clever and good sister, and, wanting to boost her in particular, and women in general, composed this little drama in which the great man, Manjusri is put in his place. But as far as Zen is concerned, which is in some ways anti-human, not to speak of anti-feminist, we may say that women are born with Zen, men have Zen thrust upon them by circumstances. The woman in the Case, Rii, together with Mōmyō Bosatsu, are together more than a match for, Buddhistically speaking, the wisest being in the world, Manjusri. Animal wisdom, which Huxley calls animal grace, in being instinctive and purely intuitional, is far superior to, far more alive than, any human wisdom, mixed as it is with desiccating thought.

Samadhi is deep contemplation of absolute truth, one of the objects of life, the other being the application of what is perceived in this state to our daily life, to the heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks that

flesh is heir to. The snapping of the fingers must be a way of de-hypnotising people. Walking round a person three times, perhaps counter-clockwise, may have the same origin. The reason for taking the woman up to the Brahman Heaven is not very clear, but perhaps simply means that Manjusri did everything in his power to awaken her.

In the Commentary, Mumon shows how he wishes us to study the story, but one rather Sunday-School explanation of it may be given here. A child is crying. Christ and Buddha and Socrates and Confucius all do their best, but the child continues to cry. Along comes an old toothless granny, and with just a few words the child is quiet and happy again. The great saints and sages take life too seriously, and make it more difficult than it already is.

## THE COMMENTARY

釋迦老子，做者一場雜劇，不通小小。且道文殊是七佛之師，因甚出女人定不得。罔明初地菩薩，爲甚却出得。若向者裏見得親切，業識忙忙，那伽大定。

The drama Old Sakya puts on the stage is a great hotchpotch. Just tell me now, Manjusri is the teacher of the Seven Buddhas; why couldn't he get the woman out of her samadhi, when Mōmyō, a beginner, could? If you can understand the reason for this without discrimination, while living a busy life of worldly affairs, you will ever be in the Dragon Samadhi.

The seven Buddhas are Vipasyn, Sikhin, Visvabhu, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kasyapa, and Sakyamuni. Some Commentators take it to be not seven, but the seventh Buddha only, that is, Sakyamuni.

The Dragon (or Serpent) Samadhi is so-called because snakes are often motionless for long periods. Mōmyō's being a beginner, 初地, refers to a complicated classification of the stages of Bodhisattvahood. Mōmyō had attained only to the first step of the ten.

As usual, Mumon is trying to put us in a dilemma, or to speak more exactly, he is giving us one striking and dramatic example of the Dilemma of which our life is entirely composed. Thus our explanation is precisely what Mumon does not wish to hear. The question, yes, the answer, no. Mumon wants us to get the problem clear. Wisdom will not solve ours, just as Manjusri could not solve his. Stupidity will, if, as Blake said, we persist in our folly. To misquote Hamlet once more, "The persistence is all."

## THE VERSE

出得出不得	渠儂得自由
神頭并鬼面	敗闕當風流

One could awake her, the other couldn't;  
Both have their own freedom.  
There is a god-mask, and a devil-mask;  
The failure was very interesting.

This is more of a puzzle than a poem, especially in the original. The first line of course refers to Mōmyō and Manjusri. The second line means that Mōmyō was free to wake the woman, Manjusri free not to wake her. The murderer is free to kill, the murdered to be killed. The sun is free to pull the earth, the earth is free to resist the pull. The god-mask and the devil-mask are worn by the same actor. Mōmyō and Manjusri (and Buddha and the woman, and the reader of this book, and the writer) are only masks; there is no need to praise one or blame the other; but who

is the actor? This is the subject of Case XLV. "The failure" is that of Manjusri, which is certainly very comforting to unwise and ignorant persons like ourselves. But the point is that failure, that is, tragedy, is more interesting, that is, has more value in it (not potential, but actual) than success, just as the *Inferno* is far more interesting than the *Paradiso*. There are other explanations (translations) of the second line. 渠儂 may be taken as "he" only, referring to Buddha, or as "she," the woman. Anyway, our fundamental vice is our inclination to take sides; needless to say, we are always on our own side. We always want to be on the winning side, forgetting that God is the dark horse that comes first in every race.



## Case XLIII

### SHUZAN'S STAFF

Rinzai  
|  
Kōke  
|  
Nanyin  
|  
Fuketsu  
|  
Shuzan

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Shuzan (Shoushan) is the only figure in this case, but this seems to be due to a "cut" in the original. Shuzan is the name of a mountain, and the monastery on it. The most famous master, whose name was Shōnen, was born in 926, became a monk when young, and studied Buddhism deeply, and soon showed abilities above the average. For his exceptional knowledge of the Lotus Sutra he was known as Nenhokke, 念法華. In his prime he became a disciple of Fuketsu (of Case XXIV), thus being in the line of Rinzai Zen. He died in 993.

#### THE CASE

首山和尚，拈竹篋示衆云，汝等諸人，若喚作竹篋則觸，不喚作竹篋則背。汝等諸人，且道喚作甚麼。

Shuzan held up his shippé, and said, "You monks! If you call this a shippé you omit its reality. If you don't call it a shippé, you go against the factuality. Tell me, all of you, what will you call it?"

A shippé, for which another name is "broken-bow,"

破弓, because it is the shape of one, is a piece of bamboo about three feet long with wistaria bound round the head of it. Originally it was used as an instrument of punishment, and then an insignia of authority by masters and priests.

Mumon has chosen the essential part of the episode. The full story is given in the *Gotōegen*, 五燈會元, the 11th volume, and can be found in Donku's edition.

Sekken Kishō, became a priest, and after visiting various masters, studied Zen under Shuzan. One day Shuzan held up his shippé and said [here follows the present Case; it then continues] Kishō snatched the shippé away and dashed it to the ground, saying, "What's this!" Shuzan said, "You're blind!" Kishō thereupon became suddenly enlightened.

However, the end of the story differs materially as given in *Zenrin-ruiju*, 禪林類聚, the 16th chapter:

....At this time, Sekken Kishō, who was among the congregation of monks, suddenly became enlightened [at Shuzan's words]. Going up to him, he snatched the shippé away from him, broke it in two, and threw the two pieces on the ground, saying, "What's this?" Shuzan said, "You're blind!" [meaning the opposite]. Kishō made obeisance.

Whichever version we take, and it is hard to choose, if we compare it to Case XL, in which Isan overturns the bottle, it is interesting to compare the violence of Shuzan with the collectedness of Isan, the difference, that is, between recent and matured enlightenment.

"You are blind!" may have a reference to what Rinzai said just before his death: "After my death, don't destroy the True Eye of the Law!" One of the monks of higher rank, Sanshō Enen, gave a great "Kwatz!" Rinzai said, "Who knows this True Law Eye, and how this blind donkey will destroy it?" If Shuzan is quoting this, it suggests that the *Zenrin-ruiju* version of the episode is correct. An important

part of this case is the meaning of 觸 and 背, which are explained in various ways. 觸 means to touch, to infringe; and 背 to go against, to distinguish. Inoue makes them mean almost the same. Jimbo says that 觸 means to become attached to, to be unable to detach oneself from; 背 is to refuse to admit. Suzuki translates these as "Assert," and "deny," taking them as a pair of contraries. Both words mean the same, and mean something different. 觸 means to be attached to the name (of shippé), to the thing as a part; 背 to be attached to the activity, to the thing as a whole, forgetting that it is also a part, a separate thing.

A good example of going beyond both "asserting" and "denying" is given in *Japanese Buddhism* (The Tourist Library, 21; this is the old number) concerning Kanzan:

His temple apparently required renovation...when the roof leaked badly, he called out to his attendants to bring something for the dropping rain. One of them ran out and brought him a bamboo basket, which pleased him greatly, while another monk who spent some time in finding and bringing a proper vessel was strongly reprimanded.

This was being attached to neither name nor function.

## THE COMMENTARY

喚作竹篋則觸，不喚作竹篋則背。不得有語，不得無語。速道速道。

If you call it a shippé, you ignore its absoluteness; if you do not call it a shippé, you ignore its relativity. Without words, without silence, tell me what it is, at once, at once!

Mumon is here repeating the exact words of Shuzan; the translation is a little different. Further, the Chinese

says "Speak!" only, not "Speak to me!" However, "Tell me!" is better, because it shows clearly that we must not merely express what impresses us but must express this impression to somebody, somebody real or imagined. Mumon's demand, "Say something so that it is neither speaking nor silence," is not quite accurate. He means "Say something, or say nothing, so that it is neither saying something nor saying nothing." In other words, you must do two opposite things at the same instant. This still is not quite complete. You must do one thing, and at the same time do-it-and-not-do-it, thus combining the relative and the absolute.

One more thing may be said about the "at once," "quickly." This is not, as was explained before, the temporal, or even the psychological speed, but rather the spiritual timelessness. Nevertheless, we must not despise the timeful speed. Brevity is the soul of wit, and here also we need as few words as possible. The point is to grasp each moment before emotion or intellection has a chance to survey it *independently*. Every act of the soul is to be as full of feeling and thought as possible, but the act is to be whole. A man and his act are to be one. All drama is the record of this oneness or of its disturbance. Horatio and Hamlet, Desdemona and Othello, Lady Macbeth and Macbeth,—these examples show us, however, that the Zen state of mind is no guarantee of success or happiness in life. Even then, the readiness, the quickness, is all.

## THE VERSE

拈起竹篋	行殺活令	
背觸交馳	佛祖乞命	◊

Lifting up the shippé  
 Is an order giving life or taking it away.  
 The asserting-denying attacks the Buddhas and

Patriarchs,  
And they beg for their lives.

Emerson says, "Speak your mind, and a base man will flee from you." How much more so a Buddha or a saint! All true activity is invincible, but the invincibility is invisible to a fool, who will not flee from you. The base man and the Buddha are thus more or less the same, but Christ himself could not save a business man or a university professor. Most commentators quote the interesting story of Bunki, who belonged to the Igyō Branch and was a disciple of Kyōzan. While still a learner of Zen, he was cook of the temple at Kyōzan, and one day he was stirring the rice-gruel in the huge cauldron, when suddenly he saw the majestic figure of Manjusri towering up in the steam. He made a terrific swipe at it with the ladle that he had in his hand, but of course with no effect. A voice said, "I am Manjusri! I am Manjusri!" Bunki bawled out, "Manjusri is Manjusri, Bunki is Bunki! If Sakyamuni or Maitreya themselves appear, I will strike them down!" and again raised the ladle, whereupon the phantom faded away.

## Case XLIV

### BASHŌ'S STICK

#### *Dramatis Personae*

To find another Bashō is like discovering another Shakespeare, not William. And in this Case we have to choose among no less than six of them, who all took their names, successively, from the same Mount Bashō. Most commentators take the Bashō of this Case to be the first, Esei, a Korean, all the rest being, we may suppose, Chinese. There are numerous accounts of the meetings of Korean monks with Chinese Zen masters, and we nearly always feel something non-Chinese and Korean about them. What this is, is difficult to say, but the Korean character has something obstinate and independent in it. The Japanese are more resilient, the Chinese more complicated.

The dates of Bashō's birth and death are not recorded, but he belongs to the 9th century, succeeding Nantō Kōyō, who was a disciple of Kyōzan of Case XXV. Another anecdote of this Bashō is the following:

A monk asked Bashō Esei, "Please show me the original face, 本來面目." Bashō sat quietly, 師默然正坐.

To sit quietly, that is, to be full of energy but with no ambition, is perhaps the most difficult thing in the world.

#### THE CASE

芭蕉和尚示衆云，你有拄杖子，我與你拄杖子。你無拄杖子，我奪你拄杖子。

Bashō said to the assembled monks, "If you have a staff, I will give you one. If you have no staff, I will take it away from you."

Inoue "translates" this as, "If you have a staff, I have given you one; if you have no staff, that is because I have taken it away from you," and says that the ordinary interpretation is no better than pseudo-Zen riddles like, "Two monks went out. It began to rain. One was wetted, the other not," or, "A sparrow sat on a stone torii and broke it." While it must be admitted that Bashō's "sermon" is excessively paradoxical, the fact that all other commentators, and the whole line of masters and monks have taken Bashō to speak paradoxically of the staff makes it our duty to explain it upon that assumption.

The most important thing about any true (poetical) paradox is that it should not be explained (away). Christ said, "He that loses his life for my sake shall save it, and he that saveth his life shall lose it." It is usually explained glibly as "He that loses his (material) life shall gain his (spiritual) one." It is the same with, "He that hateth his father and mother," which is interpreted as "love less." This makes Christ a mere punster. It is no better than, "Charles I walked and talked half an hour after his head was cut off," which is made understandable to the meanest intellect by a little punctuation. So in the present Case, it is no use saying that having a stick means being attached to it, because then what does Bashō mean by giving another? It is useless to say that not having a stick means being attached to a no-stick, because then what does Bashō mean by saying that he will take away a stick (not a no-stick)?

Zen philosophy is something like this. There is a, having a stick, and b, not having it, or having a cabbage instead, or having nothing. The Reality is that there is a staff, that is A, and at the same time we have no

staff, that is B. The Reality is AB, or we may write it BA. (The two letters should be superimposed upon each other.) From AB arises a, or b, in our (relative) world. In the absolute world it is always AB. Sometimes a appears, coming from A, we may suppose; sometimes b appears, coming from B. (Of course  $a = B$  but  $a$  does not equal  $b$ ). Why we have a, at a given time and in a given place, no one knows. It is the mystery of mysteries. It is the tail of the cow.

We always really have a and AB, that is, we have a stick, a, and a no stick B (not b); or, we have no stick, or a cabbage, or nothing, b, and a stick, A (remember  $A = B$ ). We always have a and AB, or b and AB, but A and B, being absolute, are not really distinguishable. But we suppose that a arises from that A-ness of AB, and b from the B-ness of AB.

In the Case, Bashō says, "If you have, a, a relative stick, I will give you A, an absolute stick; if you have b, a relative no-stick, I will give you B, an absolute no-stick. "Give you" means "make you aware of." Whether Bashō would agree with my explanation is the least of my worries.

So far, the explanation was purely intellectual. We must also have a (purely) emotional, or rather a poetical explanation. In *Two April Mornings*, Wordsworth tells how Matthew met "a blooming Girl" who reminded him of his dead daughter. He says, "It was a pure delight," but that he sighed painfully,

And did not wish her mine!

From the Zen point of view the important word is "wish," for "did not wish her mine," does not mean "wished her not mine." He did not wish her his, and he did not wish his own daughter alive. "Wish" means he had gone beyond wishing. Life and death are not things to be wished at all. Life is life, death is death. A stick is a stick, a no-stick is a no-stick. And at the same time, life is death, A is B, a no-stick is a stick,



B is A. But, as said before, a is never b, b is never a; and that is no doubt what Daii Mōtetsu,<sup>1</sup> meant when he said,

I disagree [with Bashō]. If you have a stick I will take it away from you, and if you have not a stick I will give you one. This is my attitude. You monks, can you use this stick, or not?

Mōtetsu says that if you have a, if you have a stick, he will take it away from you, that is, he will give you b, to remind you of B. If you have b, if you have no stick, he will give you one, he will give you a, to remind you of A. Remember, A is the stick-ness of a stick; B is the unstick-ness of a stick. And a never equals b, but A always equals B.

## THE COMMENTARY

扶過斷橋水，伴歸無月村。若喚作拄杖，入地獄如箭。

It helps you when you wade across a river, when the bridge is broken down; it accompanies you when you return to the village on a moonless night. But if you call it a staff, you will go to Hell swifter than an arrow.

The first two lines Mumon borrowed from Jikaku, who held up his staff before his monks and uttered these words. Jikaku lived in Reinji Temple, the 4th of the famous Five Mountains, 五山, but when? Before this, Suiryūzan, the disciple of Gensha, once said to his monks, "Living on the mountain for thirty years, how much vigour I have received from this staff of mine!" A monk came forward and asked, "How have you got vitality from something else?" He answered.

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1. A descendant (the 9th) of Rinza.

"Passing through the valleys, passing over the peaks, holding up oneself the East, holding up oneself the West!" The monk wants to know how one thing can get energy from another. Suiryūzan answers by not answering. We get energy from a stick if we know that we are the stick, and then everywhere we may be every thing, and every no-thing gives us its and our own power.

## THE VERSE

諸方深與淺	都在掌握中
撐天并拄地	隨處振宗風

The deep and the shallow everywhere  
Are all within my grasp.  
It holds up the sky and the earth;  
In every place it spreads the True Doctrine.

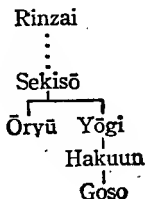
This verse seems to concern the Zen Sect and its Masters rather than having any general application. The staff is used to separate the real and the pretentious, the sheep and the goats among the teachers of Zen. "Holding up the sky and establishing the earth" means that it is Zen that holds thing together; Zen is the centrifugal and centripetal forces of the universe, which is more spiritual than material though both equally and instantaneously. The "doctrine" of Zen is no philosophical abstraction or creed, but the activities of living creatures in a living universe.

The staff is thus Tennyson's "flower in the crannied wall," which the poet also held in his hand. The masters of this world, Christ and Buddha and all the rest of them, can be tested with Tennyson's little flower. But you may say that there is a vast difference at least between the Chinese and the Englishman. One says he knows what the staff and what God and man is, the

other says he doesn't know. I think that Tennyson was to some extent pretending not to know. I think he knew pretty well, but he didn't want to know what he knew. He knew that the universe and God and man and the flower are all the same, and said so. And this itself is the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism. Tennyson, like *Oliver Twist*, asked for more, but this is greediness rather than hunger for truth.

## Case XLV

### HŌEN'S WHO IS HE?



#### *Dramatis Persona*

Just as in the last Case we had six Bashōs, so in this one we have two Hōens between which it is difficult to distinguish, reminding us of Issa's verse:

向き向きに蛙のいとはとこかな

Frogs squatting this way,  
Frogs squatting that way, but all  
Cousins, or cousins' cousins.

Katō devotes six pages to whether the author of the saying of this Case is Goso Hōen, 五祖法演, or Shiso Hōen, 四祖法演.

The trouble arises from famous priests taking their name, or nickname, from the mountain (temple) where they resided. The priests succeeded one another, but the mountain kept its name, unless, as frequently happened, the mountain was renamed, making confusion more confounded. The Tōzan 東山, was originally Hazusan, 破頭山, "Head-breaking Mountain." During the Tang period the 4th Patriarch Dōshin retired from the world in a temple there called Sōhōzan 雙峰山, Two-peak Mountain. The 5th Patriarch, when he lived here, renamed it Ōbaisan, 黃梅山, Yellow Plum Mountain, taken from the prefecture in which he was born.

This mountain was afterwards known as Gosozan, 五祖山, Fifth Patriarch Mountain. Goso, of the present Case, took his name Tōzan from the name of the Temple, Tōzenji, 東漸寺.

## THE CASE

東山演師祖曰，釋迦彌勒，猶是他奴。且道他是阿誰。

Hōen of Tōzan said, "Shaka, Miroku, are the servants of another. Tell me, who is this "Another"?"

The first question to be decided here is, who or what are Sakyamuni (Shaka) and Maitreya (Miroku)? Are they real people, one dead and gone, the other to be born on this earth? If so, the Case is rather feeble, as no Buddhist of any understanding would suppose that these two people are *per se* Final Reality, but only embodiments, materialisations, or symbols of it. Pious Hinayana devotees would be shocked by Goso's words, but the monks whom Goso was addressing, brought up on the Mahayana (not to mention Taoist) mysticism and transcendentalism, would not have had the Great Doubt raised in their minds, which is the object of every such sermon. Shall we then take 他 as the Buddha nature, the Original Essence, or the 1st Principle (of the Emperor Bu), or Ultimate Reality, or Absolute Truth or what not? What a mess we shall get into if we try to transcend not only God, but the Godhead!

Perhaps Goso is attacking the "Our Father which art in Heaven" idea which in Buddhism appears as the worship of Amida, Fudō, Kannon, Dainichi Nyorai, Jizō, and a host of lesser "persons" in China and Japan and the other Buddhist countries. This tendency is not to be deprecated because it is anthropomorphic. Animism, or rather animatism, is one of the most precious element of our human nature. What is wrong

with "Our Father which art in Heaven" is not the anthropomorphic vocabulary, "Father," but the separateness of "Which art in Heaven." Even if we say "Which is in earth, in me, in the stone and the stream," we still have "in." Evil is separation, an "in" is separation, even "is" is separation, "equals" is separation, all affirmation of identity is separation, all denial of difference is separation.

Inoue's explanation is that this he, 他, means ourselves, and that Goso is teaching his monks that we, not Sakya-muni and Maitreya, are the reality of the universe. That we are God and there is no other God but we, to parody Mahomet, is no doubt true, but it is one of the things that can be said (and is thus not Zen), and should not be said.

Jimbo says that this 他, which in Chinese conveniently means he or she or it, is what, or whom, or Whom Buddha met in his enlightenment. This must be correct, in so far as it cannot be stated in words.

As for answering the question "Who is he, she, or it?" before we answer it, it must be truly asked. "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "No man hath seen God at any time." The disciples were not sincere in asking to see God. They were not, that is, willing to pay any price to see him. Christ answers, "You see what you want to see, and almost no man really wants to see God, though he may cut himself with knives, and throw himself into the fire in his pretending to. And anyway, only God can see God. "A cat may look at a King, but it can't really see him." But at the same time, "The Son, he hath declared him," and we also must reveal in everything we may say and do Stevenson's "Unseen Playmate."

## THE COMMENTARY

若也見得他分曉，譬如十字街頭，撞見親爺相似。更不須問別人，這是與不是。

If you get to know clearly who this Other is, it is like knocking into your pa at the cross-roads. Why should you ask someone else whether it is he or not?

What is interesting about Mumon's criticism is that he jumps to the other extreme, or beyond it. This He, who seems so vague and vast, this Something, which is not "some," for it is all, and not a "thing," for it includes abstractions and non-existences, nevertheless,

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

And more than this, it is our old familiar friend, it is "Our Father which art in heaven" come back again, with a warm, loving voice. It makes us think of Blake's most vehement poem, *On Another's Sorrow*, where he tells us that it is impossible that "he who smiles on all" should not pity us.

And not sit both night and day  
Wiping all our tears away?  
O, no! never can it be!  
Never, never can it be!

## THE VERSE

他 弓 莫 挽	他 馬 莫 騎
他 非 莫 辨	他 事 莫 知

Do not draw Another's bow;  
Do not ride Another's horse;  
Do not speak ill of Another;  
Do not enquire into Another's business.

Capitalising "another" changes this verse from the mere moralising, which almost all commentators take

it to be, into a bold and transcendental Zen. In the Case and the Commentary 他 is used to refer to That which is nameless and unnameable. In the Verse it is the same 他, but commentators all take it to mean simply other people. This gives no connection whatever with the original Case.

Whatever Mumon or Shakespeare or Browning or Wordsworth writes, we should give the best, the deepest possible meaning to their words. We may take Mumon to be warning us against any sort of *Imitation of Christ*. It is the inimitability, the unpredictability of God, of Nature, that is indeed so painfully attractive to us. We are not to attempt to draw God's bow, or ride on His horse, or the four horses of the apocalypse. We must not, like Prospero in *The Tempest*, try to play at God. On the other hand, (and here Mumon can be taken as warning myself) we are not speak ill of the universe, not to criticise God, as did Tennyson in *In Memoriam*, Arnold in *The Future*, Hardy in *Jude the Obscure*, and *Nature's Questioning*. Neither are we to pry into God's secrets, or ask why, with scientific curiosity. Things are to be taken as they are; we ourselves are to ride our own war-horse, fight the good fight against our own enemies, luxury, apathy, bad taste, the superstition of happiness, and so on. The That of the Case is the master of Buddha and Miroku, but not ours. We are not masters and have no servants. We are not servants, and have no master.



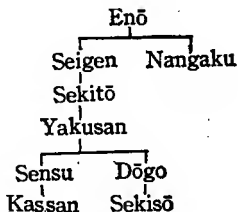
## Case XLVI

### SEKISŌ'S HUNDRED-FOOT POLE

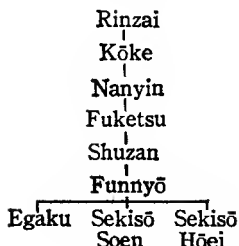
#### *Dramatis Personae*

In this Case, as in the previous one, there is trouble with the chief actor, Sekisō (Shihshuang). There are seven people of this name, but only two are famous, so we may disregard the other five.

1. Sekisō Keisho, 石霜慶諸, 807-888, of the Tang dynasty, the same period as Tōzan, Rinzai, Tokusan and so on. He became a priest at the age of thirteen, studied first the Vinaya, gave this up, learned from Isan, became enlightened under Dōgo, and succeeded him.



2. Sekisō Soen, 石霜楚圓, 986-1039, of the Sung Dynasty, the spiritual great-grandfather of Tōzan, Goso, of the previous Case. Widely separated from the above in both time and lineage, he became a priest at the age of twenty two, visited the famous Zen masters of the time, and succeeded Funnyō Zenshō.



The trouble is that there is no record of either Sekisō's ever having said the words of the Case. The following are the reason's for choosing No. 2.

a. The "ancient worthy" mentioned in the present Case is Chōsa, successor of Nansen, and spiritual brother of Jōshū, contemporary of Sekisō No. 1, Keisho. If Chōsa is thus called "an ancient worthy," it seems impossible that Sekisō should be Keisho.

b. Sekisō Soen is Mumon's spiritual ancestor, and he is likely to have chosen him for sentimental reasons.

c. We find questions on the hundred-foot pole by Goso, the spiritual great grandson of Soen, through Yōgi and Hakuun, and Tosotsu, of Case XLVII, also his spiritual great-grandson, through Ōryū and Hōhō. In all this Katō follows Inoue, pages 1336-41. Donkan seems to know only one Sekisō, that is Keisho, whose biography he gives, and Jimbo also gives Keisho only. Any way, the whole question rests upon the implication of the term ancient worthy, 古德. Is the use of this to signify Chōsa enough to prove that "Sekisō" was not a contemporary of Mumon? Did Mumon himself know any one Sekisō, or was the use of this kōan by "Sekisō" such common knowledge that there could be no mistake about the matter? Why did he not say "Chōsa"? Didn't he know his name? Under what circumstances did writers of Mumon's time use the expression "ancient worthy"? What was the state of the knowledge of this history of Zen at that time? Whatever the answer to these ques-

tions, we cannot know what originated the kōan. "Sekisō" used it often; it was a favourite of his; it was effective in his hands. Inoue points out that this kōan, No. 2878, in *Zemmon Kōan Taisei*, is ascribed to Nansen, who is antecedent, chronologically, to all the Sekisōs. Again, the form of the kōan given to Chōsa is a more developed one than that of Sekisō, being in fact a *ge* of four lines, and we would expect Sekisō to be antecedent to Chōsa, but this is not so. Perhaps Mumon made a mistake and attributed Nansen's kōan to Sekisō.

An account of Chōsa is given in Volume III. He was rather a queer character, a sort of rolling stone of no fixed abode, preaching when and where it pleased him to do so. Little is known of his life before this, other than that he succeeded Nansen as head of Rokuon Temple, 鹿苑寺. He was feared by all other monks, and given the nickname of Tiger of the Peak, 岑大蟲. His name was 景岑, Keishin.

## THE CASE

石霜和尚云，百尺竿頭，如何進步。又古德云，百尺竿頭坐底人，雖然得入未爲眞。百尺竿頭須進步，十方世界現全身。

Sekisō said, "How can you go on further from the top of a hundred-foot pole?" Again, an ancient worthy said,

"One sitting on the top of a hundred-foot pole  
Has entered the Way, but is not yet the real  
thing.

He must go on further from the top of the  
hundred-foot pole,  
And reveal his true self in the ten directions."

The *Shōyōroku*, Case LXXIX, gives us some details of the circumstances of Chōsa's verse. It says:

Chōsa got a monk to ask monk E,<sup>1</sup> "What was it like before you interviewed Nansen?"<sup>2</sup>

E was silent for some time. The monk then asked, "How was it after the interview?" E answered, "Nothing special." The monk went back and told Chōsa of this. Chōsa said, (the verse in the present Case).<sup>3</sup>

The monk asked, "How can we go beyond the top of a hundred-foot pole?" Chōsa said, "The mountains of Rōshū, the waters of Reishū."<sup>4</sup> The monk said, "I don't understand." Chōsa said, "The Four Seas, the Four Lakes are the transformed King."<sup>5</sup>

Chōsa's verse is here an implied criticism of the monk's rather passive attitude in his answers to the two questions. The first one, remaining quiet for a while, is all right, but the second one, "I can't say there was any difference," is correct enough, for from the absolute point of view there is no difference before and after enlightenment, but the absolute view only is wrong; it must have the relative digested in it, in other words, the answer must be alive, lively, life-giving. The expression "revealing the real self in the ten directions" is interesting when compared to three passages in the Bible: "Nor do men light a candle and put it under a bushel." "And your father shall reward you openly." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify God."

## THE COMMENTARY

進得步，翻得身，更嫌何處不稱尊。然雖如是，且道百尺竿頭，如何進步。 嘎。

1. Apparently a disciple of Nansen.

2. This must be the time of E's enlightenment.

3. There is a slight difference in the last line. "show" is replaced by "is".

4. In Rōshū there is beautiful mountain scenery, and in Reishū the rivers are clear and limpid.

5. The King is oneself.

Going on beyond the top of the pole and turning his body about,—what is there here to dislike or to praise? But even so, tell me, how we proceed onwards from the top of a hundred-foot pole? Aha!

Mumon says that if we jump off the top of the pole, our own and everybody else's pole, we can love our enemies because we have none. "All things work together for good." (We must stop the quotation at this point, as Wordsworth did when he said,

All that we behold  
Is full of blessings.)

But this is still talking about it. Mumon asks us how we are going to make this jump out of death into life. Someone is rude, or snivelling, or treacherous, or has atrocious taste; what are you going to do? It is the same question, and requires the same violent energy of mind to answer it. Just to be on our (apparently) lofty moral pedestal is not enough. And anyway we are not on the top of any pole, we are submerged in the mud of emotion, that is, self-love, and the brambles and briars of intellectual dichotomy. Only the will can get us out, but our will cannot get others out. They are still obtuse, self-deceiving, lethargic, vulgar, and peevish.

## THE VERSE

瞎却頂門眼	錯認定盤星
拚身能捨命	一盲引衆盲

If the [third] eye in the forehead is darkened  
And we mistake the star on the balance for the  
measurement,

We throw away our body and soul  
And blindly lead other blind people.

The Buddha Eye is the one above the other two. Originally this was the eye in the forehead of Mahesvara, the eighth of the Twenty Devas, 二十天. The Sanskrit sign 𑖀, called 伊字三點, was associated with the three eyes of Siva, .'. , more or less equal to Mahesvara, and, in its triangular shape, indicated neither unity nor difference, neither before nor after. Later the upper of the three eyes was used to signify the one Buddha eye above the relativity of the other two. The use is thus opposite to that of English, in which "one-eyed" means limited, and unable to see things in perspective.

Everyone has this third eye; all living things, and even inanimate things, have it. All use it without knowing it. It is with this eye that we read poetry, and, oddly enough, listen to music. We may go so far as to say that this eye is things as they really are, since things see themselves (only) when we use it.

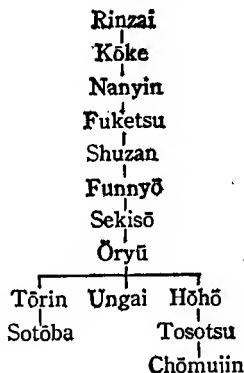
The last part of the verse is interesting. Those with eyes lead those with eyes, those who have none lead the blind. All lead, all are led. The expression "the blind man leading a crowd of other blind men" comes from the *Nirvana Sutra*, Chapter XXIX, but the whole idea of this Case must come from the Chinese acrobats who, from ancient times (seen for example in pictures incised on bows still kept in the Shōsōin in Nara) performed all kinds of "stunts" at the top of a pole, often balanced on another man. Zen masters must frequently have thought, at such street scenes, "What wonderful talent! But we in Zen must go beyond even that."

## Case XLVII

### TOSOTSU'S THREE BARRIERS

#### *Dramatis Persona*

Tosotsu, (Toushuai), 1044-1091, became a priest in his early years, studied Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism, and then Zen.



One day he visited Shuchi at Kaiei-ji Temple. When Shuchi saw him, and they had a few words together, realising his great learning, he said to him, "I see you are above the ordinary in character. Why is it then you talk and behave like a drunken man?" Tosotsu got red in the face and sweated at this, but said, "I beg you not to deny me your gracious compassion." Shuchi then spoke further with him, probing and pruning him, but Tosotsu was simply bewildered. After this, Shuchi allowed him to have (Zen) interviews with him, 入室.

One day Shuchi said to him, "Have you been to see

Igū of Hōshō?" Tosotsu replied, "I have seen his *Records*, and that was enough. I don't want to see the writer." "How about Kokubun<sup>1</sup> of Tōzan (temple)?" Tosotsu retorted, "Kanzaishi<sup>2</sup>? That blockhead with his pants stinking of piss? What's he good for?"<sup>3</sup> Shuchi said, "What you must do is to make that same stink of piss your own." Tosotsu acted upon his instruction, and went to Tōzan, and penetrated deeply into Zen. Then he returned once more to Shuchi, who asked him, "You have seen that Kanzai<sup>2</sup> creature; how about the Great Thing?"<sup>4</sup> Tosotsu said, "But for what you told me to do, I would have wandered in error all my life," and thanked him profoundly. After this he began as a master at Tosotsuji Temple, from which he took his name. He died at the early age of forty eight. When Tosotsu was born, Secchō was sixty five. When Tosotsu was twenty, Engo was born, 1063. When Tosotsu was twenty three, William the Conqueror won the Battle of Hastings. When Tosotsu died, he wrote:

Two score years and eight;  
I have got rid of saints and sinners,—  
Not that I was such a hero,  
But because the roads of Ryūan<sup>5</sup> were smooth.<sup>6</sup>

## THE CASE

兜率悅和尚，設三關問學者。撥草參玄，只圖見性。即今上人性，在甚處。識得自性，方脫生死。眼光落時，作麼生脫。脫得生死，便知去處。四大分離，向甚處去。

Tosotsu made three barriers, asking the monks:

- 
1. That is, Hōhō, died 1102.
  2. Where Kokubun lived.
  3. Tosotsu had the idea that independence of others is the aim and essence of Zen.
  4. Enlightenment. The Truth.
  5. Where he lived.
  6. He had good teachers.



"Getting rid of your illusions and penetrating into the truth is done by seeing into your nature. At this moment, where is your nature?

When you realise what your nature is, you are free from life, free from death. When the light of your eyes is falling,<sup>7</sup> how can you be free from them?<sup>8</sup>

If you have freed yourself from life and death, you know where you are going.<sup>9</sup> When the Four Elements separate, where are you off to?"

The question of the soul and its immortality seems to have arisen, or at least to have been a pressing problem, late in the history of Zen. Buddha himself refused to answer it, because he himself was not sure, perhaps, saying it was an unprofitable discussion, but even if this is true of one's own continued existence after death in some form or other, the death of someone one loves deeply makes the matter an urgent one. However, Tosotsu has no answer in the ordinary sense of the word. Indeed, he only asks the question, just as Shakespeare does, evidently because he believes that to answer the questions of life is the object of life itself. To paraphrase Confucius, if a man sees the Question in the morning, he may die in the evening without regret. Or to put the matter in another way, we answer the questions in order to understand the questions. The answer is the means, the question is the end.

The first problem is, where is this "nature" of ours which we must "see into"? The answer is simple

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7. At the point of death.

8. Life and death.

9. After death.

enough, it is Nature. This has scientific support. Eddington says:

The mind stuff is not spread out in space and time; they are part of the cyclic scheme ultimately derived out of it. But we must presume that in some way or aspect it can be differentiated into parts. Only here and there does it rise to the level of consciousness, but from such small islands proceeds all knowledge. Besides the direct knowledge contained in each self-knowing unit there is inferential knowledge. The latter includes our knowledge of the physical world.

But Zen does not admit "inferential knowledge," outside the barrier. Zen aims at direct knowledge of the physical world and this is to be gained in a very unscientific way: "Except a seed fall into the ground and die...." "Not my will, but thine be done," "Blessed, that is, All-knowing, are the poor." In this sense Zen is right to avoid not only philosophy and science, but literature, art, music and culture generally, which are the riches of life, all those things "which shall he added unto you" only if you are really poor in the Eckhartian sense.

The second problem is, how can you be free of change when you yourself are changing physically, mentally, spiritually, essentially, at every moment. The first barrier deals with space, the second with time. How can we be free from death when we are dying daily towards the grave? How can we be free of life when we are living as best we can? To be free from death is conceivable, given some kind of immortality, but how can we be free from birth, when we are already born? Transmigration past is no more the answer to the problem than transmigration future, which begs the question, or disregards it.

The answer again is simple. We are to live with life and die with death, not separated from them. The problem of suffering is insoluble, because we think of ourselves as apart from pain and death, in opposition

to them. We can be free from change only by changing with it; Shelley teaches us this.

The third barrier combines both space and time; *where* do you go at the *moment* of death. Once again the answer is simplicity itself, nowhere. But what is this "where," and "nowhere"? How if you are already "nowhere" *before* the moment of death? What is this "when" and "ever"? How if you are "never" all the time?

Oh to be nothing, nothing  
Only to lie at His feet,  
A broken and emptied vessel,  
For the Master's use made meet!

This is what the hymn says, but how if we are already nothing, empty, not to be emptied? What is the place of which Christ says, "I have prepared a place for you?" What is the time of which Christ speaks when he says, "Before Abraham was I am"?

When Sōjō was about to be executed, he said, "The Four Originals have no master," 四大元無主, flatly contradicting what Hōen says in Case XLV. The inherent impossibility of answering any question, and in particular of saying what life-and-death is, what Zen is, may be illustrated by what Professor Lindeman writes concerning the way in which the precise position and velocity of an electron is a meaningless concept:

A well-known instance of a similar anomaly is the impossibility of describing the small chemical substances which are changed by being brought into contact with air: Nitric oxide in the presence of oxygen forms the well-known brown gas nitrogen-peroxide. It is obviously meaningless to discuss the smell of nitric oxide. It could only be ascertained by bringing it into contact with the mucous membrane of the nose. It would be impossible to do this without its being exposed to air, and being converted into nitrogen-peroxide. Its smell therefore can never be ascertained and there is no sense in discussing it.

Tosotsu is discussing this very thing. What is the smell of the universe before it is smelled?

Tosotsu seems to have found very few, during his short career, able to pass his three barriers. Mujin Koji, a Confucian scholar and friend of Ōanseki, was one day at a (Buddhist) temple, and seeing the vast quantity of Sutras there, said, "Our Confucius has not so many writings as this barbarian, has he?" Mujin wanted to write against Buddhism, but one day came across the *Yuima-kyō*, and opening it at random read:

此病不地大，亦不離地大。

My illness is not that of the [element of] earth; nor is it unrelated with the [element of] earth.

This is what Yuima answers Manjusri who comes to ask him about his illness, which is actually that of all human beings. Mujin was struck by the depth of this, and studied Buddhism from this time onward. He met Tosotsu, and after one sleepless night, he stumbled over his chamber-pot, and suddenly became enlightened. What price vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour!

## THE COMMENTARY

若能下得此三轉語，便可以隨處作主，遇緣即宗。其或未然，飽食易飽，細嚼難飢。

If you can say the three passwords, you are master wherever you may be. If you are not yet able to do so, coarse food we get tired of, and it is difficult to be hungry after well-digested food.

The difficult of this Commentary is the literal meaning of the last sentence. "Coarse food" is explained by old commentaries as "gobbling down one's food," that is, though enlightenment is a leaping of the mind,

this one jump is not enough. Zen, to be properly understood, needs to be studied in its details, and practised in all the details of daily life; only then can we be said truly to have passed the three barriers.

## THE VERSE

一念普觀無量劫  
如今覷破箇一念

無量劫事即如今  
覷破如今覷底人

One thought fills immensity;  
To see eternity in an hour.  
If we see through this thought,  
We see through the thinker of it.

The first two lines are said to come from the *Kegon-gyō*; I have in turn borrowed two of Blake's sayings. We may add,

Eternity is but a thought  
By which we think of Thee.

Looking into one's mind, 見性, means looking into everything. But everything is every thing. Looking into one's mind means looking into eternity. But eternity is this particular moment.

In the third line, "see through" means sweep away, not to have the thought, the idea of Zen, of enlightenment, and thus no idea of a sinner and a saint, of sin and of saintliness, of sinhood or sainthood. This is really jumping off the pole.

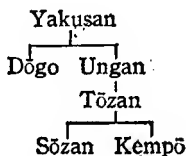
The first two lines may be taken as the passing of the first barrier, so that all is one, one is all; my nature is Nature. The third line is passing the second barrier. Changing every moment is going from thought to thought, as Blake said, upon "each moment as a couch of sweet repose," or as Thoreau said of some walkers, "They rest the whole body at every step." The fourth

line is passing the third barrier. "*Where* do you go *when?*" is to be changed into "*Where* do *you* go *when?*" and the answer is that you are not you, besides being you, and this you-not-you is not amenable to time or place, but only to place-not-place and time-not-time.

Case XLVIII  
KEMPŌ'S WAY

*Dramatis Personae*

Kempō, (Chienfeng) was enlightened by Tōzan, but nothing else is known of him.



THE CASE

乾峯和尚因僧問，十方薄伽梵，一路涅槃門，未審路頭在甚麼處。峯拈起拄杖，劃一劃云，在者裏。後僧請益雲門。門拈起扇子云，扇子踴跳，上三十三天，築著帝釋鼻孔。東海鯉魚，打一棒，兩似盆傾。

A monk said to Kempō, "The Bhagavat of the ten directions have one road to Nirvana. Where, may I ask, does that road begin?" Kempō lifted up his stick, drew a line, and said, "Here". Later, the monk asked Ummon's help. Ummon held up his fan, and said, "This fan has jumped up to the thirty third Heaven, and hit the nose of the Deity there. The Carp of the Eastern sea gives one stroke, and it rains cats and dogs."

Kempō draws a line, apparently in the air. This is good in a way, but it might have been better if he had drawn it on the ground, and made it more definite, concrete and particular. This line on the ground is the Gate of Heaven. Ummon's answer is precisely the opposite. One would like to think that he had heard Kempō's. The answer of Kempō is like, "I am that I am"; Ummon's like, "Before Abraham was I am." These, and the answer of Kempō and Ummon, are both infinite, infinitely small, and infinitely large.

The monk's question is in part a quotation from the *Suramgama Sutra*, 首楞嚴經. The Thirty Third Heaven is the highest on the top of Mount Sumeru.

## THE COMMENTARY

一人向深深海底行，簸土揚塵。一人於高高山頂立，白浪滔天。  
把定放行，各出一隻手，扶堅宗乘。大似兩箇馳子相撞著。世上  
應無直底人。正眼觀來，二大老惣未識路頭在。

One goes the bottom of the deep sea, and, scratching in the dirt, raises dust. The other goes to the top of the highest mountain, and raises foaming waves that touch the sky. One grasping, the other releasing, with his one hand each supports the deep doctrine. They are just like two riders, neck and neck. In this world, such people who grasp truth directly are difficult to find. But if we look at these two great teachers with a true eye, neither of them really knows where the Nirvana road is.

This last statement by Mumon, which looks like a reversal of all he has said before, is so. However many lines Kempō draws, however wildly Mumon may speak, each has only half the entrance, half the way, that is,



they do not, as Mumon says, know where the road starts, because it is something unknowable. When we really know that it cannot be known, when we see the universe as one great question mark, we are on the way to the Way.

## THE VERSE

未舉步時先已到	未動舌時先說了
直饒著著在機先	更須知有向上竅

Without raising a foot, we are there already;  
The tongue has not moved, but the explanation  
is finished.

Though each move takes the initiative,  
We must know the final checkmate.

Raising a stick, raising a fan, moving the feet, moving the tongue,—these are not the real activity, but the outward expressions of it. The real activity is in the will, not even in the intuition by which each act is performed. The last two lines are a metaphor from go, a game played with black and white pieces, in which the opponent's pieces are gradually surrounded. There is always another possibility, a better way of doing the same thing, so that the final checkmate is always to come. As in *Alice in the Looking-Glass*, it is cake yesterday, cake tomorrow, never cake today.

## MUMON'S POSTSCRIPT

The vital sayings and doings of the Buddha and the Patriarchs, the judgements like the confession of a criminal, have now all been set down without any additions on the part of the author. He has taken the lid off his head, and showed you his eye-balls; and all of you should receive this immediately, and not seek for it from others. If you are a man of fundamental ability, when you hear a small part you will know the essence, and it is not necessary for you to enter the Gate, or go up the stairs, but, squaring your elbows, you may pass the barrier without asking the permission of the barrier-keeper. Don't you remember how Gensha<sup>1</sup> said, "No gate is the gate of salvation; no-meaning is the meaning of the man who walks the Way"? And Hakuun<sup>2</sup> said, "The Way is clearly known<sup>3</sup>; this is This!<sup>4</sup> Why can't you pass?" All explanation is just painting the ground with milk. If you have passed the gate, Mumon is useless to you; if you have not passed it, you are still deceiving yourself. It is easy to be clear about the Nirvana Mind, but not to be clear about the Wisdom of Difference.<sup>5</sup> If you

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1. See vol. II. 50 ff.

2. Hakuun Shutun, 1045-1073, an enlightened disciple of Yōgi. He studied the doctrines of the various Zen Sects, and was exceedingly popular in his time.

3. This is Stevenson's "The Way is plain before all, like the grooves of launching."

4. Every thing is a Thing!

5. It is comparatively easy to attain the timeless, placeless, selfless, otherless, unborn, undying wisdom; but to apply this to the relative world of time and place, self and other, birth and death,—this is troublesome, but is the only thing which will justify the creation of the universe.

understand clearly this Wisdom of Difference, you can make your country one worth living in.

The Change of Era to Jōtei,<sup>6</sup> Five days before the End of the Summer Retreat.<sup>7</sup>

Respectfully Inscribed by Mumon Bikkhu<sup>8</sup> Ekai,  
Eighth in Succession from Yōgi.

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6. By the Emperor Risō, in 1228, the year after Dōgen returned to Japan from China. Mumon at this time was forty five.

7. The Summer Retreat called, *geango*, 夏安居, begins on April the 15th, and ends on the 15th of July; thus, on the 10th of July.

8. Monk.

## APPENDIX

Together with the *Mumonkan* there are usually printed four other short pieces, Mumon's *Zen Warnings*, Sōju's *Verse on Ōryū's Three Barriers*, Mōkyō's *Endorsement* and Amban's *Forty Ninth Case*. They follow here in this order.

### MUMON'S ZEN WARNINGS

To follow the compass and keep to the rule is to tie oneself without a rope.<sup>1</sup> Doing what you like in every way is heresy<sup>2</sup> and devilry.<sup>3</sup> To unify and pacify the mind is quietism<sup>4</sup> and false Zen. Subjectivity and forgetting the objective world is just falling into a deep hole.<sup>5</sup> To be absolutely clear about everything and never to allow oneself to be deceived is to wear chains and a cangue.<sup>6</sup> To think of good and evil is to be in Heaven-and-Hell.<sup>7</sup> Looking for Buddha, looking for Truth outside oneself is being confined in two iron Cakravala.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Zen is perfect freedom; but at the same time, everyone is perfectly free; the bonds are imaginary (some of them, at least).

2. See Case XXXII.

3. Literally, (being among) the devils' army.

4. This refers to Sōtō Zen as contrasted with the *kanna* Zen of Rinzai. See Case XX.

5. We must not be obstinately idealistic, but follow nature.

6. To be always on the qui vive for superstition is to end in throwing out the baby with the bath-water.

7. That is, in relativity.

8. There are nine cakravala, or concentric mountain ranges round Mount Sumeru, the centre of any universe. The ninth, of which Mumon speaks here, is of iron. There is only one, of course. The "two" refers to "looking for Buddha, and looking for Truth outside oneself.

One who thinks he is enlightened by raising thoughts<sup>9</sup> is just playing with ghosts. Sitting blankly in Zen practice is the condition of a devil.<sup>10</sup> Making progress is an intellectual illusion.<sup>11</sup> Retrogression is to go against our religion.<sup>12</sup> Neither to progress nor retrogression is to be merely a dead man breathing.<sup>13</sup> Tell me now, what are you going to do?<sup>14</sup> You must make the utmost effort to accomplish your enlightenment in this life, and not postpone it into eternity, reincarnating throughout the three worlds.

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9. This concerns the seven grades of bodhi, 七菩提分, the first of which is the discrimination of the true and false.

10. A dead man.

11. This also is the Rinzai idea, as opposed to that of Sôtô.

12. Which is to become Buddha.

13. Compare Whitman's "And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his own funeral drest in his shroud."

14. To put Zen into practice.

## SŌJU'S VERSE ON ŌRYŪ'S THREE BARRIERS

Of Muryō Sōju, nothing is known except his lineage: Yōgi — Hakuun — Goso — Engo — Daie — Setsuan — Ikuō — Muryō Sōju. He seems to have been a contemporary of Mumon.

Ōryū Enan, spiritual son of Sekisō, is one of the founders of the Five Houses, Seven Sects, of (Chinese) Zen. He was born in the fifth year of the reign of the Emperor Shinsō, 1002, and died in 1069.

In the following, the first line of each of the first three verses (of 6,6,6,6 characters) is by Ōryū, the second, third, and fourth lines of each of the first three verses are by Sōju, who also wrote the whole of the fourth verse, and the fifth verse, which is longer than the rest, being 7,7,7,7 characters. The printing will make the matter clear, the heavy type being by Ōryū, the rest by Sōju.

我手何似佛手，模得枕頭背後。不覺大笑呵呵，元來通身是手。

WHY IS MY HAND LIKE THE BUDDHA'S HAND?

Feeling around at the head of the bed and at one's back,<sup>1</sup>

Involuntarily giving a great laugh,

Because, of its nature, the body is all hand.

This comes in Case LXXXIX of the *Hekiganroku*. Ungan asked Dōgo, "The Bodhisattva of Great Mercy (Kannon) with so many hands and eyes,—what does he do?" Dōgo answered, "It is like a man feeling back for the pillow at midnight." "I get you!" said Ungan. "Get what?" asked Dōgo. Ungan said, "The whole

---

1. Both Inoue and Katō translate this as "scratching one's back," which the original does not justify.

body is hands and eyes." Though, or rather because, half-asleep, and it is dark, the body-mind works perfectly and skilfully to pull the pillow under the head again. This is the work of Kannon.

我脚何似驢脚，未舉步時踏著。一任四海橫行，倒跨楊岐三脚。

# HOW ARE MY FEET ARE LIKE DONKEY'S FEET?

Before walking, my feet tread the earth.  
When I walk, I go all over the Four Seas;  
Leisurely, I am astride Yōgi's three-legged donkey.

A monk asked Yōgi, "What is the Buddha?" and he answered, "A donkey with three legs lifting his hooves and walking along." Zen is the religion of disrespectful respect, and respectful disrespect. It has something of Sam Weller about it.

人人有箇生緣，各各透徹機先。那吒折骨還父，五祖豈藉爺緣。

# PEOPLE ALL HAVE ANTECEDENT DETERMINANT CIRCUMSTANCES.

Each of them comes from his karma from previous lives.

Nata broke his own bones and gave them back to his father.

Did the Fifth Patriarch have any paternal relation?

Nata came in Mumon's Preface. We are told in the *Gotōegen* that Prince Nata cut off his flesh and gave it to his mother, broke his bones and gave them to his father. This story does not seem to appear in Indian legends or sutras. The body, Sōju says, is not part of the antecedent determinant circumstances. Also in the *Gotōegen* we are told that the Fifth Patriarch, Gunin, was born of a virgin. In a previous life he was Saishō Dōja, 栽松道者, and in his old age met the Fourth Patriarch, Dōshin, so he "borrowed" the body of a woman and had himself born once more so as to meet Dōshin again and become his disciple. The point is

that our reincarnations are spiritually, not physically determined,—a very doubtful proposition from all points of view.

佛手驢脚生緣，非佛非道非禪。莫怪無門關險，結盡衲子深冤。

The Buddha hand, the donkey's legs, the determinant circumstances,—

These are not Buddha, not the Way, not Zen.

But do not underestimate the danger of Mumon's barrier;

It has aroused the deep animosity of Zen monks.

Ōryū's three barriers are nothing so wonderful, but Mumon's barrier is not to be slighted. It has given much trouble ever since the *Mumonkan* was published.

瑞巖近日有無門，掇向繩床判古今。凡聖路頭俱截斷，幾多蟻蚋起雷音。

Mumon recently at Zuiganji Temple

Gave his opinion of ancient and modern kōans, sitting in the Zen seat,

And rendered speechless both people and sages.

Is there no dragon to roar him down?

請無門首座立僧，山偈奉謝。紹定庚寅季春，無量宗壽書。

A poor verse thanking Head Monk Mumon for coming and guiding the monks. Late Spring of the 3rd year of Jōtei, 1230, written by Muryō Sōju.



## MŌKYŌ'S EPILOGUE

Mōkyō 孟珙 was a warrior whose life is told in the *History of Sō*, 宋史, at the end of which we are told, "He also penetrated into Buddhist learning, and called himself Muan Koji," 亦通佛學, 自號無庵居士. At the time of his death he was Prefect. The *Endorsement* was written the year before.

達磨西來, 不執文字. 直指人心, 見性成佛.

Daruma came from the West, not attached to words, pointing directly to the mind of man, seeing into his nature, and becoming a Buddha.<sup>1</sup>

The origin of these Four Statements is not known, but non-attachment to words is expressed in the *Lankavatara Sutra*, the *Yuima Kyō*, and in the *Shōshitsu Rokumonshū*, 少室六門集, "Six Essays by Shōshitsu," that is, Daruma, by whom they are supposed to have been written. The fifth essay, *Goshōron*, 悟性論, speaks of "not being attached to letters, and deliverance from names," 不著文字名解脫.

"Direct pointing" and so on is based on the sixth essay of the *Shōshitsu Rokumonshū*, entitled *Treatise on the Lineage*, 血脈論.<sup>1</sup>

說箇直指, 已是迂曲. 更言成佛, 郎當不少. 既是無門, 因甚有關. 老婆心切, 惡聲流布. 無庵欲贅一語, 又成四十九則. 其間些子講訛, 剔起眉毛薦取. 淳祐乙巳夏重刊.

This "direct pointing" and explanation is already a meandering. And "becoming a Buddha" is not a little senile. Why has Mumon<sup>2</sup> this "barrier?" Though

1. See Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, vol. 1, pages 219-221.

2. Mumon also means no-barrier.

it is his grandmotherly kindness, voices of opposition have arisen. Muan is also adding some unnecessary words like warts, and making Case LXIX. Open your eyes and see if you can find even a little wrong with it.

The Summer of the Fifth Year of Junyū, 1245, the Second Edition.

This so-called Case LXIX is not worth much, and shows that a (Chinese) warrior knows very little about Zen. When we come to the Japanese warriors, I hope to find the same thing.

# AMBAN'S FORTY-NINTH CASE

Amban was also known as Teisēshi. A scholar and a statesman, he was a contemporary of Mumon. He died in 1251, when Mumon was sixty nine. Amban wrote the following, in 1246, the year after he received a villa, 漁莊 by Lake Seiko from the Emperor Risō (理宗) in 1245.

無門老禪，作四十八則語，判斷古德公案。大似賣油餅人，令買家開口接了，更吞吐不得。然雖如是，安晚欲就渠熱爐熬上，再打一枚，足成大衍之數，却仍前透似。未知老師從何處下牙。如一口喫得，放光動地。若猶未也，通見在四十八箇，都成熱沙去。速道速道。

The venerable Mumon<sup>1</sup> made the words of forty eight Cases, and judged the ancient worthies' kōans. He is like a fried-bean-cake seller. The buyers have their mouths opened and the cakes pushed in until they are full, and they can neither swallow them nor disgorge them. That's what it's like. But Amban wants to add another extra cake (to the forty eight) that are on the red-hot fire. I don't know where the Rōshi<sup>2</sup> will put his teeth into it. If he can swallow it, he will emit light and move the earth.<sup>3</sup> If he can't, I will fry them all up together again. Tell me at once! Tell me at once!<sup>4</sup>

經云，止止不須說，我法妙難思。安晚曰，法從何來，妙從何有。說時又作麼生。豈但豐干饒舌，元是釋迦多口。這老子造作妖怪，令千百代兒孫，被葛藤纏倒，未得頭出。似這般奇特話靶，匙挑不

1. Mumon was now sixty three.

2. Mumon.

3. Like Buddha, when preaching. According to the Preface to the *Hokke Sutra*, there are Six Indications of the Buddha preaching, 法華六瑞. his speaking of the infinite, his samadhi, a rain of flowers, an earthquake, the joy of the listeners, the Buddha-light. The above two are the fourth and the sixth.

4. Your understanding of Zen.

上，飯蒸不熟。有多少錯認底傍人，問云，畢竟作如何結斷。安晚合十指爪曰，止止不須說，我法妙難思。却急去難思兩字上，打箇小圓相子，指示衆人。大藏五千卷，維摩不二門，總在裏許。

The sutra<sup>5</sup> says, "Stop! Stop! You must not expound it!"<sup>6</sup> My Truth is mysteriously difficult to grasp intellectually." Amban says, "Where does this 'Truth' come from?"<sup>7</sup> What is 'mysterious'?<sup>8</sup> How is it expounded?<sup>9</sup>

Have you not heard how Bukan was (told he was) a chatter-box?<sup>10</sup> This originated in Shaka's talkativeness.<sup>11</sup> That old chap created a lot of phantoms, and so bound the descendants of a thousand and one ages in entanglements,<sup>12</sup> that they couldn't stick their heads out. Then Mumon comes along with his fine talk, and you can't spoon them<sup>13</sup> out of it all, you can't hot the cakes<sup>14</sup> whatever you do. This fine talk is pretty well misunderstood, and people ask, "What's the conclusion of all this?" Amban puts his ten finger-nails together<sup>15</sup> and answers, "Stop! Stop! It is not to be expounded! My Truth is marvellously difficult to grasp intellectually!" and quickly over the two characters for "difficult to think" draws a small circle, ○, and shows it to people. The five thousand<sup>16</sup> volumes of the sutras and Yuima's "Not

5. The *Hokke Kyō*.

6. This is the first two lines of a four-lined stanza.

7. There is no such thing as "Truth."

8. Everything is an open secret. We are wrong from lack of will, not from lack of understanding.

9. It is expounded more by the body than by the mind, as D.H. Lawrence believed.

10. This story comes in the Records of the Great Priest of the Sung Period. 宋宗高僧伝, published in 守端拱元 in Japan 1651. It says that 釈迦干 (Bukan) lived at Kokuseiji Temple on Mount Tendai, and among the monks there were Kanzan and Jittoku. Once Bukan introduced Ryōkyūin to them as incarnations of the Bodhisattva Manjusri, at which they laughed, called Bukan a chatter-box, went out of the temple Gate, and never came back. 更不復入寺.

11. The idea of Buddha, the Law, Enlightenment, Nirvana, and so on.

12. Verbal and intellectual and emotional.

13. The descendants, the monks.

14. Can't make the forty eight Cases mentally digestible.

15. In supplication.

16. Usually said to be five thousand four hundred.

two gates" are all contained in it.

The circle, *ensō*, 圓相, is a symbol used in Zen for enlightenment, as it both bounded and boundless. The 3rd Patriarch, Sōsan, says in the *Shinjinmei*:<sup>17</sup>

The circle is like the Great Emptiness,  
Nothing lacking, nothing too much.

Many of the great Zen masters have, with their finger, or *hossu*, or *nyoi*,<sup>18</sup> 如意, or staff, drawn a circle in the air to manifest Thusness, Truth, the Nature of the Law, the Buddha Nature, the Buddha Heart, the Great Way, and so on, instead of attempting to say what these are, since the circle is less misunderstandable than words. Especially in the Igyō Sect was the circle used, the handing down of this method being called *ensōingi*, 圓相因起. It is said to have begun with Chū Kokushi of Nanyō, that is, Echū, the disciple of the 6th Patriarch. He handed it on to Tangen Ōshin (or Shinō), dates unknown, who attended upon Echū for many years. When Echū died, he prophesied to Tangen that thirty years after his death a *srami* would appear and propagate his doctrine of the circle. Much later this prophecy was fulfilled. Tangen one day ascended the pulpit, and Kyōzan came out from the monks assembled there, and, drawing a circle, acted as if presenting it to Tangen with outstretched palms, and then stood there with folded hands. Tangen put his fists one on the other. Kyōzan came forward three paces, and bowed as women bow. Tangen nodded, and Kyōzan made his obeisance. Afterwards Kyōzan went to Isan, showed him the circle, and was immediately confirmed by him. Kyōzan always said, "I received the form, 體, from Tangen; the activity, 用, from Isan."

17. See Vol. 1, page 61.

18. A short staff, originally a back-scratcher, or, according to some, used as a kind of key for a reader of difficult sutras.

Kyōzan used the circle to show his own meanings, and test those of his disciples. He employed the cow circle, ⊕, to express obedience; the Buddha circle, ⊗, to express enthralling; the man circle, ⊙, to express the reason, the simple circle, ○, to express willingness to interview someone.

In Case LXIX of the *Hekiganroku* we are told the following:

Nansen, Kisu, and Mayoku were on their way to pay their respects to Chū Kokushi, when Nansen drew a circle on the ground and said, "If you can speak,<sup>19</sup> we'll go on!" Kisu sat down in the middle of the circle; Mayoku bowed a woman's bow. Nansen said, "So we won't go!" Kisu said, "What's the big idea?"

Case XXXIII of the *Hekiganroku* is the following:

Chinsō, a Government Director, visited Shifuku,<sup>20</sup> who, when he saw him coming, drew a circle. Chinsō said, "I have only just got here, and not yet sat down, and do you draw a circle?" Shifuku went into his room and shut the door.

The circle has some connection with what is called circumambulation, an ancient religious practice, found in early Hinduism. *The Great Hannya Sutra* tells us that the pyre on which the body of Buddha lay took fire after the five hundred disciples had walked round it three times. The stupas had circular galleries for the circumambulation of pilgrims. It is described by Homer. In Rome the bridal pair walked round the altar, perhaps a round altar, 圓壇. In ancient Japan the pair walked round the central pillar of the house. The Roman Catholic Church uses circumambulation in the consecration of churches, the enthroning of bishops, and so on. In the *Platform Sutra*, Chapter VII we are

19. Show your Zen.

20. Isan—Kyōzan—Seitō—Shifuku.

told that Yōka, when he visited the 6th Patriarch, walked round him three times, 遶三匝. We cannot help thinking of *Kubla Khan*:

Draw a circle round him thrice,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

In Buddhism the circle, the wheel, is used with a meaning of inexorability, the doctrine of the twelve *nīdanas*. It is found in *James*, III, 6, connected with the tongue, as it is by Amban, but in quite a different way:

And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the wheel of nature,<sup>21</sup> and is set on fire by hell.

The Zen use of the circle was as Jung sees it, "a symbol of integration." The circle has a fixed centre, but an elastic circumference. It is limited by its radius, but its circumference is infinitely long. However, such things as circles and Cow-Herding Pictures, of which the last is a simple circle, are inferior, in their abstraction, to the more homely staff, or three pounds of flax, or a shit-stick.

Yuima's Not-two Gate of the Law forms the 9th chapter of the *Yuima Kyō*. Hōjizai Bosatsu said it was transcendence of life and death. Tokushu Bosatsu said it was egolessness. Tokuchō Bosatsu said it was in not judging things to be clean or dirty. Zenshuku Bosatsu said it was going beyond the dualism of bodily and spiritual movement. Twenty nine Bodhisattvas gave their various opinions on the matter. Last, Monju Bosatsu says that in his opinion the Not-two Gate of the Law means not speaking, not silent, detaching oneself from all questioning and answering. He then asks Yuima his opinion, Yuima is silent and utters not a word, 默然無言.

21. This is literally, "Wheel of birth."

## POSTSCRIPT

The *Mumonkan* marks the end of Zen more than the 1417-21 *Imitation of Christ* does that of Christianity. Up to about the time of Mumon, great masters had dealt with their monks in their own way, "a poor thing but mine own." They had given original answers to unoriginal questions. But from now on, after the publication of the *Mumonkan*, the teachers of Zen were to use the same old stale problems, for which they would learn beforehand the same old stale answers. The *Mumonkan* is the imitation of the Zen saints.

The problem always has been how to combine the uniqueness and freedom of the individual with the sameness and absolutism of truth. The Roman Catholic Church has chosen the second of these two antitheses, and freedom of thought leads in a straight line to Hell. For the Zen Sect, the dilemma does not exist, since for Zen everything is dilemma. Zen lives and moves and has its being in contradiction and paradox. But the (intellectual) question remains; the tail won't go through the window. How is it possible for every person to have the same satori, if there is no such thing as fixed truth, no such thing as Zen? Oscar Wilde says, "When someone agrees with me, I know I am wrong." Whitman says, "Only what everyone thinks is true." I agree with Whitman, but I live according to Oscar Wilde's saying, and so must Zen. The best thing about Mumon is his speaking ill of everything and everyone. We must imitate Christ in his imitation of nobody. They of old time said unto you, but I say unto you. . . .



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## Publisher's Note

It is with sincere regret that the publisher has to inform the reader that Dr. Reginald Horace Blyth, the author of *Zen and Zen Classics* and of many other brilliant works on Zen, Haiku and Senryu, died in the fall of 1964 and that as a consequence of the author's sad and unexpected death the publisher has been obliged to modify the original plan for a 8-volume series on *Zen and Zen Classics* as follows:

- Vol. I General Introduction, From the Upanishads  
to Hui-neng (Already published)
- Vol. II History of Zen ( " )
- Vol. III History of Zen (cont'd.) (In preparation)
- Vol. IV *Mumonkan* (First planned as Vol. V)
- Vol. V Twenty-five Zen Essays  
(Already published as Vol. VII,  
to be reprinted as Vol. V)





The publisher would like to express his gratitude to Dr. Daisetz T. Suzuki, who has been kind enough to contribute a preface to the present volume at the publisher's request. He would like to express his thanks also to Mr. Ryūmin Akizuki for reading the proofs, especially the section on original Zen texts, and to Mr. Noboru Inoue, one of the author's favorite pupils, for his work in reading the complete proofs, compiling the index and many other tasks necessary for the publication of the present work.


March 1966





CIRCLE, TRIANGLE, AND SQUARE, by Sengai

These are the three fundamental Forms of the universe, Godhead, Nature, Manhood. The Circle is finite infinity, timeful timelessness. The Triangle is fixed, unalterable Natural Law, perfect in the Galaxy, and "the speck of stone which the art stirs, and moves on." The Square is human, and vulnerable, the shape of the (primitive) bricket, the house, the castle, the city, the state 国. The Circle, Triangle and Square can be inscribed within and circumscribed without each other: , , , and also ad infinitum, . We are reminded of the ancient occult and alchemistic symbols.

Dr. Suzuki writes to me: My interpretation is: ○ represents "Formlessness," "Emptiness," or "Void," where there is yet no separation of Light and Darkness. △ symbolizes "the beginning of form out of formlessness." □ is the combination of triangles  and represents the multitudinosity of things. In short, ○ △ □ is a kind of creation story.

There is, however, another interpretation. Sengai may have wished by this to synthesize Shingon, Tendai, and Zen. ○ is Zen.

△ is the three mysteries of Shingon, which are: mouth (口) mystery or "oral secrets" (密); the body secrets (身); and mind secret (mystery) (意). These three secrets are known as the Sanmitsu (三密). The Shingon teaches the unity of the three—oral, bodily, and mental.

△ may also be regarded as corresponding to Tendai's 空假中 (Emptiness, Phenomenality, and the Middle which latter means "synthesis" or "identity"). The Tendai teaches the identity of Emptiness and this phenomenal world which is temporal and spatial.

□ is 四大 (four "greats") which are the four elements of which the world is composed: earth, water, fire, wind.

Sengai's idea is probably to state the unity of all the Buddhist teachings: Zen, Shingon, and Tendai.





## CASE XVI

Ummon, by Sengai

The inscription is  
the words of the Case  
itself.

CASE XXX

Baso, by Sengai

The inscription says:

One "Kwatz!" Three days!  
Baso's "Kwatz!" is said to  
have made Hyakujo deaf for  
three days.

